Encyclopaedia of Indian War of Independence

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Motilal Nehru

FORMATIVE YEARS

1, Church Road, Allahabad. A large palatial house; with its elegant furnishings, spacious lawns, fruit gardens, sparkling fountains, swimming-pools, tennis-courts, horses, carriages, cars and retinue of servants, it reminded visitors of the country man sions of the British aristocracy. It was not far from the University and the High Court and on a moonlit night one could trace from its roof the silver line of the sacred Ganges and the silhouette of the Naini Central Gaol across the Jumna. The Honourable Pandit Motilal Nehru, the proud owner of the house, was the cynosure of all eyes as he drove to the High Court every morn ing in a magnificent carriage drawn by a fine pair of horses and with liveried servants in attendance. Robust and rubicund, with chiselled features, a determined chin and rather formidable moustaches, well dressed (his suits were made in Savile Row), he commanded inside and outside the High Court an admiration not unmixed with awe. His ready wit delighted the Honourable Judges as much as it discomfited rival counsel. Genial, fond of good food, good wine and good conversation, a staunch friend and a straightforward opponent, he was known among his many friends, British and Indian, for his generous hospitality.

He had everything a man could wish for: a fabulous income, the respect of his peers, a lovely though fragile wife, a clear-eyed son, two charming daughters. He was the idol of the Bar, the favourite of the Bench, the darling of destiny. Nothing could have been more apt than the name he chose for his house: Anand Bhawan (Abode of Happiness).

This image of Motilal at the zenith of his professional career was to undergo important changes in the last ten years of his life. But in the minds of his contemporaries it remained unaltered to the last and thirty years after his death it still lingers in popular imagination. It is usual to refer to him as a 'born aristocrat', with a 'princely' style of life and a 'right royal manner' of lavish hospitality. Motilal did not, however, inherit a kingdom, nor even an estate. He was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth; he had no 'gold-bearing genes'.

Motilal's family originally belonged to the valley of Kashmir, which is famous for its lofty mountains, dancing brooks, flower filled meadows and beautiful women. Early in the eighteenth century it was also noted for its scholars; one of them, Pandit Raj Kaul, caught the eye of the Mughal king Farukhsiyar when he visited Kashmir about the year 1716, and was persuaded to migrate to Delhi, the imperial capital, where he was granted a house situated on the canal which then ran through the city.

Living on the bank of the canal (nahar), Raj Kaul's descendants came to be known in the Kashmiri community as 'Nehrus', or rather 'Kaul-Nehrus'. Raj Kaul also received a few villages as jagir from the Mughal Emperor. But unfortunately his patron did not live long. Challenged by ambitious satraps and refractory nobles from within and powerful enemies from without, the Mughal Empire was in the last throes of a rapid dissolution. Farukhsiyar's brief reign had its disgraceful denouement in 1719, when he was dragged out of the harem of his own palace, deposed, imprisoned and finally done to death at the instance of his own ministers, the ambitious Syed brothers.

Raj Kaul's royal patron thus disappeared from the scene. With the decline of the imperial authority during the following years his jagir dwindled until it amounted to no more than zamindari rights in certain lands. The last beneficiaries of these rights were Raj Kaul's grand sons, Mausa Ram Kaul and Saheb Ram Kaul. Mausa Ram's son, Lakshmi Narayan, became the first Vakil of the East India Com pany at the Mughal court of Delhi. Lakshmi Narayan's son Ganga Dhar -- the father of Motilal Nehru and the grand father of Jawaharlal Nehru -- was a police officer in Delhi when the Mutiny broke out in 1857.

By 1857, the 'Nehrus', the descendants of Raj Kaul, had been settled in Delhi for nearly a century and a half. During this period the political landscape had been completely transformed.

FATHER OF MOTI LAL NEHRU; THE STORY OF GANGADHAR

This is the true story of Ganga Dhar (not Ganga Dhar Nehru), father of Moti Lal Nehru. The adjunct 'Nehru' derived from the Persian word 'Nahr' meaning a canal or nullah, was adopted by Moti Lal, who, like all members of his family, had a fascination for alien Mohammedan names mostly in Arabic or Persian. The adjunct 'Nehru' added a Persian flavor to his otherwise Hindu name. That was very desirable for the family, as will be explained later. Otherwise, under normal circumstances, his name would have been Moti Lal Dhar.

The adjoining picture of Ganga Dhar was obtained from Robert Hardy Andrews' book titled A LAMP FOR INDIA - The Story of Madame Pandit (meaning Jawahar's first sister Vijay Lakshmi, alias Nan.) That book was first published by Prentice-Hall in 1967, a long time after the division of the country. But the fact on the scion of the dynasty, namely Ganga Dhar, had been kept a secret from the Indian public, primarily, the Hindus.

It is now quite clear, as you will soon see, that Ganga Dhar was an assumed name. The man we now know as the paternal grandfather of Jawahar Lal (son of Moti Lal) was in reality a sunni Mohammedan; in fact he was a Mogul nobleman. The important question is why did he then adopt a Hindu kafir's name? In this case a Kashmiri Brahmin's name?

Krishna Hutheesing (Jawahar's second sister) had also mentioned in her memoirs, that their grandfather Ganga Dhar was the city Kotwal of Delhi (an important post) prior to 1857's uprising. Bahadur Shah Zafar was still the sultan of Delhi. It was extremely unlikely that he would hire a Hindu for that very important post.

Apparently, some investigations had been made on this count (please see Mahdi Husain's Bahadur Shah II and the war of 1857 in Delhi - 1987 edition) but no one could discover Ganga Dhar's name as the Kotwal of Delhi. Well, how could they? Ganga Dhar's real name then was Ghiyasuddin Ghazi (or something like that)

which had been quietly changed to his new Hindu name, just before the English forces entered the city. The sultan had replaced the earlier Kotwal as well as the City Governor Mirza Maniruddin. The latter had been dismissed by Bahadur Shah Zafar on charges of spying for the English. The Naib Kotwal, a subordinate officer, was a Hindu; his name was Bhao Singh. And another Hindu, one Sri Kashinath was the thanedar of the Lahori Gate area of Delhi. Their names were found in the records but Ganga Dhar was missing. Be that as it may, the fact remains that Ganga Dhar indeed was the grandfather of Jawahar and Krishna Hutheesingh.

And how did he look like? Ganga Dhar had a thick beard which would put even Pakistani president Tarar's beard to shame! Ganga Dhar's thick moustache extended beyond his ears. He used to wear a Mogul cap and had in his both hands a long sword. Does that look like a Kashmiri Brahmin? No, not at all!

THE MUSLIM GRANDFATHER OF JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Ghiyasuddin Ghazi (the word means 'kafir-killer') looked exactly like a sunni Mogul. Don't they say: 'If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, well, then it IS a duck.' The same was the case with Ganga Dhar, the Kashmiri Brahmin alias Ghiyasuddin Ghazi the sunni Mogul. Only this vital information had been kept a secret from the Hindus of India, like so many other secrets of the family!

Our readers! If you can, please read up all references made in the memoirs of Jawahar Lal and Krishna Hutheesingh on Ganga Dhar. True to the last whisker, the picture portrayed on our website, does represent a Mogul nobleman, so proudly mentioned by both the brother and the sister. The element of secrecy crept in when it became clear that the Nehrus' Mogul ancestry, if made known to India's Hindu public, might spell trouble for the forthcoming 'reign'. The 'Hindu by accident' got wise to the fact and acted as if he was indeed, son of a Kshmiri Brahmin, Moti Lal Nehru by name.

Now, why was it at all necessary for Ghiyasuddin Ghazi to change his name to Ganga Dhar? Dhar is a well-known Kashmiri Hindu surname. Many of these 'Dhars' were forced converted into Islam; their names were then changed to 'Dar' just to distance

themselves from the Hindu 'Dhar'. The smart Moti Lal added the Persian epithet 'Nehru' thus making the name sound even more 'un-Hindu'.

The English army, quite unlike the Hindu army, was made of a different material. While Hindus let the defeated enemy go free (like Prithviraj Chauhan had done and then regretted), the English were after each and every Mogul. They were shooting down all Mohammedans for fear of facing another claimant to the Delhi throne. Panic and fear ran like wildfire among the Moguls. There was nowhere to flee. The city had been surrounded by the 'firangi' forces and their allies, the Sikhs and the Gurkhas. It was then that the wily Mohammedans came up with the brilliant idea of name-changing. Ghiyasuddin became Ganga Dhar, almost like Yusuf Khan who had become Dilip Kumar, many years later.

Delhi was ransacked. All residents (both Hindus and Mohammedans) had to leave and take shelter under tents set up by the 'firangis' outside city ramparts. For full two months they remained there in the tents (like the Kashmiri Hindu refugees do today). During this time, the English searched thoroughly each vacated home and discovered immense wealth, which was, by the rules of the game, confiscated by the new rulers. A month later, the Hindus were asked to return to their homes. The Mohammedans were allowed to return even later.

In the aftermath, many Mohammedans fled to nearby cities not yet fully under the control of the English. Agra was such a city. It still had considerable Mogul influence. And Jawahar's Mogul grandfather Ganga Dhar, with his entire family, left for Agra. How do we know that? Jawahar states in his own autobiography that on their way to Agra, the English troops detained Ganga Dhar's family. Ganga Dhar told them that they were not Mohammedans but Kashmiri Hindus. Jawahar explains in his autobigraphy that the primary reason for the detention was their Mogul features. The Kashmiri Hindus looked very much like Mohammedans from Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan and so on. And behold the English let Ganga Dhar and his family go to Agra. The rest is history.

[Afterword: The unbecoming fascination of the Nehrus for alien Mohammedan connections persisted even beyond the Mogul

roots. Please read up K.N. Rao's 'The Nehru Dynasty', Chapter XXIII. Reference is made there to Indira's (falsely described as the wife of Parsi Firoz Gandhi when he was no such thing; he was a pure and simple sunni Mohammedan whose father Nawab Khan was a liquor supplier of Allahabad) letters in the publication Two Alone, Two Together (letters between Indira Gandhi and Jawahar Lal Nehru) edited by Sonia Gandhi. The publishers of this book were London's Hoddard and Stoughton. In that book is featured a letter by Indira to her father, Jawahar and it says:

"Some months ago when I was at Metheran, Masi (aunt) wrote saying that she had heard from some Parsis that it was written in their ancient book that a Hindu of high family would marry into a Parsi family (here, a 'Hindu of high family' is Indira and 'Parsi' is Firoz, son of sunni Nawab Khan) and their son would do great things - religious reform and so on. Masi asked me to inquire into the matter but it quite slipped my mind. Last evening my mother in law (meaning Nawab Khan's so called Parsi wife, converted to islam at the time of her nikaah) came in a state of great excitement. She had also heard something of the sort, a slightly different version. According to her, the son was the reincarnation of the Shah Behram of Persia.

"Baby's (meaning Rajiv Gandhi's) patri (horoscope) has arrived. I am enclosing it. It is written in Gujarati but I suppose you will be able to get it read. I am enclosing an English translation of the jyotishi's remarks. I am sending all this registered - please do the same when you return it. The good thing about it is supposed to be that there are five planets in one house," and so on.

Quite clearly, the Nehrus could oscillate from the Mogul to the Persian at will as long as the roots appeared to be Mohammedan, alien or home made, and farther removed from indigenous roots the better. May we ask what great things did Rajiv do, other than stealing the Bofors money and jeopardizing the lives of our jawans by supplying them with inferior canon? And what reform was she talking about other than legalizing polygamy among the Mohammedans of India and granting them special privileges to talaaq their womenfolk, sans alimony? No doubt Indira would not move against the fornication-prone Pakistani ruffians when they were shooting down unarmed Bengali Hindu civilians. Some three millions were thus decimated but she had not even lifted a finger until the uproar inside the country became literally uncontrollable. Then again, she let go the 93,000 Pakistani soldiers scot free without exacting a quid pro quo from the enemy. Neither did she ask for the trial of Tikka Khan. And during that time, our jawans captured by the Paki army on the western front, were summarily shot in prisons, against the Geneva regulations. Is it surprising that in Europe today one can purchase picture post cards of Hari Mandir Temple with a comment on the back that Indira had secretly become Mohammedan and that is why she had chosen the Gurpurnima day (when the temple was choc a bloc with women and children) to shoot the pilgrims down, in thousands. And when the 93,000 Pakis left for their home, they had put on weight, were well-dressed and so on. She was some musalmanani of great piety although out of fear for divulging her Islamic roots, she had refused to visit the Kaaba as desired by the Saudi Royal family. Since when the Saudis have taken to inviting non-Mohammedans to visit Mecca?

Let us not be impressed by the 'five planets' and all such 'bakwaas'. What really happened is in front of our eyes, is this. In a country where they would not even hurt a chicken, there were not one, not two but three assassinations in quick succession. And all three were Gandhis. One was shot by a Hindu, the second was turned into pulp by two Sikhs and the third was pulverized by a Catholic lady of Tamil extraction. In the mean time, the bastard son of Mohammad Yunus (still the custodian of the Netaji Papers), Sanjay aka Sanjiv, killed himself in that plane accident. And the 'sarkari chacha' had died of syphilis, which apparently he had contracted in a local dhaba from a glass of drinking water! Well! Who will believe that? What really happened can only be described as divine dispensation to preserve and protect our 'dharma rajya' of Bharat, that the Congress and the secularists along with the Mohammedan traitors were bent upon destroying for good!

EARLY LIFE

Motilal Nehru was born in Agra, to Ganga Dhar in a Kashmiri Pandit family. He became one of the first generation of young Indians to receive a 'Western-style' college education. He attended

Muir College at Agra, but failed to appear for the final year B.A examinations. He then enlisted as a lawyer in the English courts.

Nehru became a barrister and settled in the city of Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. Many of Motilal's suits involved civil cases and soon he made a mark for himself in the legal profession of Allahabad. With the success of his practice, he bought a large family home in the Civil lanes of the city and aptly christened the house Anand Bhavan (lit. Abode of happiness). In 1909 he reached the pinnacle of his legal career by gaining the approval to appear in the Privy Council of Great Britain. His frequent visits to Europe, angered the Kashmiri Brahmin community as he refused to perform the traditional "prayashchit" or reformation ceremony.

Nehru was a man of many elitist habits and had a westernized lifestyle. He was one of the moderate, wealthy leaders of the Indian National Congress. Under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi in 1918, Nehru became one of the first to transform his life to exclude western clothes and material goods, adopting a more native Indian lifestyle. To meet the expenses of his large family and large family homes (he built Swaraj Bhavan later), Nehru had to occasionally return to his practice of law.

Motilal Nehru married Swaroop Rani a Kashmiri Brahmin.

POLITICAL CAREER

Motilal Nehru twice served as President of the Congress Party. He was arrested during the Non-Cooperation Movement. Although initially close to Gandhi, he openly criticized Gandhi's suspension of civil resistance in 1922 due to the murder of policemen by a riotous mob in Chauri Chaura in Uttar Pradesh. Motital joined the Swaraj Party, which sought to enter the British-sponsored councils. The party failed however, and Motilal returned to the Congress.

The entry of Motilal's glamorous, highly-educated son Jawaharlal Nehru into politics in 1916, started the most powerful and influential Indian political dynasty. When in 1929, Nehru handed over the Congress presidency to Jawaharlal (Jawaharlal was elected, with Gandhi's backing), it greatly pleased Motilal and Nehru family admirers to see the son take over from his father. Jawaharlal had opposed his father's favor for dominion

status, and had himself not left the Congress Party when Motilal helped found the Swaraj Party.

NEHRU REPORT

Motilal Nehru chaired the famous Nehru Commission in 1928, that was a counter to the all-British Simon Commission. Nehru's Report, the first constitution written by Indians only, conceived a dominion status for India within the Empire, akin to Australia, New Zealand and Canada. It was endorsed by the Congress Party, but rejected by more radical Indians who sought complete independence, and by many Muslims who didn't feel their interests, concerns and rights were properly represented.

Death and Legacy

Motilal Nehru's age and declining health kept him out of the historic events of 1929-1931, when the Congress adopted complete independence as its goal and when Gandhi launched the Salt Satyagraha. He was arrested in 1930, however, after his son was arrested, but was soon released due to his failing health. He died on February 6, 1931.

Nehru is largely remembered for being the patriarch of India's most powerful political dynasty which has since produced three Prime Ministers. The widow of Nehru's great-grandson Rajiv Gandhi, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi leads the current Congress coalition government in India. Her son Rahul Gandhi is a freshman Member of Parliament.

Elected as Congress President twice; formed Swaraj Party and was Leader of the Opposition in the Central Legislative Assembly; prepared a draft Constitution for India.

Motilal Nehru was a doyen of Indian freedom struggle. He was the patriarch of what later became modern India's most powerful political dynasty. He was one of the most brilliant lawyers of the pre-independence India. He was elected as Congress President twice and is famous as the father of India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru. He was affectionately called as Pandit Motilal Nehru.

Motilal Nehru was born on May 6, 1861 in Delhi in a Kashmiri brahmin family. His father was Gangadhar and his mother was

Jeevarani. Motilal Nehru's father died before Motilal was born. Moti Lal Nehru was brought up by his elder brother Nandalal who was a junior lawyer in Allahabad.

Motilal Nehru became one of the first generation of young Indians to receive 'Western-style' college education. He attended Muir College at Agra, but failed to appear for the final year B.A examinations. He then decided to join legal profession and appeared for law examination. Motilal Nehru secured first place in law examination and started his practice as lawyer in Kanpur in 1883.

Later Motilal Nehru settled in Allahabad and earned a mark for himself as one of the best lawyers of the country. He used to earns in lakhs every month and lived with great splendor and pomp. He bought a large family home in the Civil Lines of Allahabad and christened it as Anand Bhavan. He frequently visited Europe and adopted Western lifestyle. In 1909 he reached the pinnacle of his legal career by gaining the approval to appear in the Privy Council of Great Britain. In 1910, Motilal contested the election to the Legislative Assembly of the United Provinces and won.

The arrival of Mahatma Gandhi on Indian political scene transformed Motilal Nehru. Jalianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar in 1919 shattered his faith in British rule and he decided to enter freedom struggle. The British government appointed a Commission to inquire into the Jalianwala Bagh incident. The Congress boycotted this commission. It appointed its own Inquiry Committee. Mahatma Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Chittranjan Das were among its members. Following Mahatma Gandhi's call for Non Cooperation movement, he gave up his legal practice. He also shunned his luxurious lifestyle, gave away his Western clothes and articles and started wearing khadi.

Motilal Nehru was elected as Congress President in 1919 and 1920. In 1923, he founded the Swaraj party along with Deshbandhu Chittranjan Das. The object of the Swaraj Part was to enter the Legislative Assembly as elected members to oppose the government. Motilal Nehru first became the Secretary and later the President of Swaraj party. He became the Leader of the Opposition in the Central Legislative Assembly and vociferously opposed and exposed the decisions of the government. When the Simon Commission was appointed in 1927, Motilal Nehru was asked to draw up a draft constitution for free India. The constitution, drawn up by him, proposed Dominion status for India. The radical wing of the Congress led by Jawaharlal Nehru, and Subash Chandra Bose opposed Dominion status and favoured full freedom.

Pandit Motilal Nehru, an eminent lawyer and politician, was born on May 6, 1861. The Nehrus hailed from Kashmir, but had settled in Delhi since the beginning of the eighteenth century. Motilal's grandfather, Lakshmi Narayan, became the first Vakil of the East India Company at the Mughal Court of Delhi. Motilal's father, Gangadhar, was a police officer in Delhi in 1857, when it was engulfed by the Mutiny. When the British troops shelled their way into the town, Gangadhar fled with his wife Jeorani and four children to Agra where he died four years later. Three months after his death Jeorani gave birth to a boy who was named Motilal. Motilal spent his childhood at Khetri in Rajasthan, where his elder brother Nandial became the Diwan. In 1870 Nandlal quit Khetri, qualified as a lawyer and began to practice law at Agra. When the High Court was transferred to Allahabad, be moved with it.

Meanwhile Motilal passed the matriculation examination from Kanpur and joined the Muir Central College at Allahabad. Athletic, fond of outdoor sports, specially wrestling, brimming over with an insatiable curiosity and zest for life, he soon attracted the attention of Principal Harrison and his British colleagues, in the Muir Central College, who took a strong liking to this intelligent, lively and restless Kashmiri youth.

Motilal decided to become a lawyer, topped the list of successful candidates in the Vakil's examination in 1883, set up as a lawyer at Kanpur, but three years later shifted to Allahabad where his brother Nandlal had a lucrative practice at the High Court. Unfortunately, Nandlal died in April 1887 at the age of forty-two, leaving behind five sons and two daughters. Young Motilal found himself, at the age of twenty-five, as the head of a large family, its sole bread-winner.

In 1889 Motilal's wife Swarup Rani gave birth to a son, who was named Jawaharlal. Two daughters, Sarup (later Vijayalakshmi

Pandit) and Krishna (later Krishna Hutheesing) were born in 1900 and 1907 respectively. In 1900 Motilal purchased a house at Allahabad, rebuilt it, and named it Anand Bhawan (the abode of happiness). His legal practice was meanwhile growing. A rise in his standard of living was paralleled by a progressive westernization, a process which was accelerated by his visits to Europe in 1899 and 1900. Thorough-going changes, from knives and forks at the dining table to European governesses and tutors for the children, ensued.

In May 1905 Motilal again sailed for Europe, this time with his whole family. He returned in November of the same year after putting Jawaharlal to school at Harrow. From Harrow, Jawaharlal went to Cambridge where he took a Tripos in Natural Science before being called to the Bar in 1912.

Motilal's early incursions into politics were reluctant, brief and sporadic. The list of 1,400 delegates of the Allahabad Congress (1888) includes: "Pandit Motilal, Hindu, Brahmin, Vakil, High Court, N.W.P. (North-Western Provinces)." He attended some of the subsequent sessions of the Congress, but unlike his Allahabad contemporary Madan Mohan Malaviya, he was no more than a passive spectator. It was the tug-of-war between the Moderates and the Extremists in the aftermath of the Partition of Bengal which drew Motilal into the arena and, strangely enough, on the side of the Moderates. In 1907 he presided over a Provincial Conference of the Moderate politicians at Allahabad.

In 1909 he was elected a member of the U.P. Council. He attended the Delhi Durbar in 1911 in honour of the visit of King George V and Queen Mary, became a member of the Allahabad Municipal Board and of the All India Congress Committee. He was elected President of the U.P. Congress. Nevertheless, it was not politics but domestic and professional pre-occupations which were the dominant interest of his life during this period. But from 1912 onwards when JawaharIal returned from England, there were forces at work, both at home and in the country, which were to lead Motilal into the maelstrom of national politics.

The First World War generated deep discontent in several sectors of Indian Society which found a focus in the Home Rule Movement. Motilal had been reluctant to join the Home Rule League, but the internment of Mrs. Besant in June 1917 brought him into the fray. He became the President of the Allahabad branch of the Home Rule League. Now began a perceptible shift in Motilal's politics. In August 1918 he parted company with his Moderate friends on the constitutional issue, and attended the Bombay Congress which demanded radical changes in the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. On February 5, 1919 he launched a new daily paper, the Independent, as a counterblast to the well-established local daily paper, the Leader, which was much too moderate for Motilal's taste in 1919.

The emergence of Mahatma Gandhi on the Indian political stage changed the course of Indian history; it also profoundly influenced the life of Motilal Nehru and his family. The Rowlatt Bills and the publication of the Satyagraha pledge in February 1919 deeply stirred Jawaharlal; he felt an irresistible call to follow the Mahatma. Motilal was not the man to be easily swept off his feet; his legal background predisposed him against any extra-constitutional agitation. It was clear to both father and son that they were at the crossroads. Neither was prepared to give in, but at Motilal's instance Gandhiji intervened and counselled young Nehru to be patient.

Shortly afterwards events marched to a tragic climax in the Punjab; the holocaust of Jallianwala Bagh was followed by Martial Law. Motilal did what he could to bring succour and solace to that unhappy province. He gave his time freely, at the cost of his own legal practice, to the defence of scores of helpless victims of Martial Law, who had been condemned to the gallows or sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

Elected to preside over the Amritsar Congress (December 1919), Motilal was in the centre of the gathering storm which pulled down many familiar landmarks during the following year. He was the only front rank leader to lend his support to non-cooperation at the special Congress at Calcutta in September 1920. Motilal's fateful decision to cast in his lot with Gandhiji was no doubt influenced by the tragic chain of events in 1919. Apart from the compulsion of events, there was another vital factor without which he may not have made, in his sixtieth year, a clean break with his past and plunged into the unknown. This was the

unshakeable resolve of his son to go the way of Satyagraha. Immediately after the Calcutta Congress Motilal resigned from the U.P. Council, abandoned his practice at the Bar, curtailed the vast retinue of servants in Anand Bbawan, changed his style of living, consigned cartloads of foreign finery to public bonfires and put on khadi.

In December 1921 both father and son were arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment. In February 1922 came the anti-climax, when Gandhiji first announced and then suddenly cancelled mass civil disobedience. In March the Mahatma himself was arrested, tried for sedition and sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

When Motilal came out of gaol in the summer of 1922, he found that the movement had declined, the Congress organisation was distracted by internal squabbles, and the constructive programme could not evoke the enthusiasm of the intelligentsia. Motilal felt that the time had come to revise the programme of non-cooperation so as to permit entry into Legislative Councils. This revision was resisted by those who regarded themselves as the faithful followers of the Mahatma. A long and bitter controversy, which nearly split the Congress, ensued. However, Motilal and C. R. Das founded the Swarajya Party in January 1923, had their way, and contested the elections at the end of 1923. The Swarajya Party was the largest Party in the Central Legislative Assembly as well as in some of the Provincial Legislatures. From 1925 onwards it was recognised by the Congress as its political wing.

The spotlight shifts for the next six years to the Legislative Assembly where Motilal was the leader of the Opposition. With his commanding personality, incisive intellect, great knowledge of law, brilliant advocacy, ready wit and combative spirit, he seemed to be cut out for a Parliamentary role. The Legislative Assembly, however, was no Parliament. It was a hybrid legislature elected on a narrow and communal franchise; it had a solid bloc of official, nominated, European and some Indian members who took their cue from the irremovable executive. At first Motilal was able to secure sufficient support from the Moderate and the Muslim legislators to outvote the Government. He ruled his own party with an iron hand, but found his task increasingly difficult from 1926 onwards when communal and personal squabbles divided and weakened the Swarajya Party.

Towards the end of 1927, with the appointment of the Simon Commission, there came a political revival. The exclusion of Indians from the Commission united Indian parties in opposition to the Government. An All-Parties Conference was convened by Dr. Ansari, the Congress President, and a Committee, including Tej Bahadur Sapru and headed by Motital, was appointed to determine the principles of a constitution for free India. The report of the Committee - the Nehru Report as it came to be called - attempted a solution of the communal problem which unfortunately failed to receive the support of a vocal section of Muslim opinion led by the Aga Khan and Jinnah.

The Nehru Report, representing as it did the highest common denominator among a number of heterogeneous Parties was based on the assumption that the new Indian Constitution would be based on Dominion Status. This was regarded as a climb-down by a radical wing in the Congress led by Subhash Bose and Motilal's own son who founded the "Independence for India League". The Calcutta Congress (December 1928) over which Motilal presided was the scene of a head-on clash between those who were prepared to accept Dominion Status and those who would have nothing short of complete independence. A split was averted by a via media proposed by Gandhiji, according to which if Britain did not concede Dominion Status within a year, the Congress was to demand complete independence and to fight for it, if necessary, by launching civil disobedience.

The way was thus opened for Gandhiji's return to active politics and for the revival of Satyagraha. Motilal was at first more amused than impressed by Gandhiji's plans for the breach of the salt laws, but as the movement caught on. It found him against the advice of his doctors in the centre of the political arena. He was arrested and imprisoned; but his health gave way and he was released. But there could be no peace for him when most of his family was in gaol and the whole of India was passing through a baptism of fire. In the last week of January 1931 Gandhiji and the Congress Working Committee were released by the

Government as a gesture in that chain of events which was to lead to the Gandhi-lrwin Pact. Motilal had the satisfaction of having his son and Gandhiji beside him in his last days. On February 6, 1931 he passed away.

Motilal had a rational, robust, secular and fearless outlook on life. A brilliant lawyer, an eloquent speaker, a great parliamentarian, and a greater organizer, Motilal was one of the most notable and attractive figures of Indian nationalism in the Gandhian era.

LANGUAGE POLICY IN THE MOTILAL NEHRU COMMITTEE REPORT, 1928

The Simon Commission - A Challenge before the National Leadership

The all-exclusive British Parliamentary delegation, the Simon Commission, without associating any Indian with it, was sent to India in1928 to review the political progress since the introduction of the 1919-1921 Reforms. The Simon Commission's visit to India provided yet another opportunity to Indians of all classes and religions to unite as a single determined community. Hostile demonstrations greeted the Simon Commission wherever they went. While the Indians demonstrated their unity, the then Secretary of State for India, Lord Birkenhead "challenged the nationalist leadership to devise a constitution for India that would be acceptable to all classes and communities in the country."

Can Indians be One and United?

The assumption of this challenge was that the Indian National Congress would not be able to meet this challenge and bring out a Constitution acceptable to the various communities of India.

In addition, there was also "the assumption that the National leadership in India was drawn from an irresponsible body of men; that the people of the country had still to acquire the consciousness of nationhood; that the great religious minorities, the Muslims in particular, would not make common cause with the Hindus in presenting joint constitutional demands before the British Government, and last but not the least, that Princely India remained largely untouched by the forces that were at work in the provinces of British India" (Pande 1935:146).

The Run up to the Motilal Nehru Committee

This was the background in which the Motilal Nehru Report was prepared; which, in fact, laid the foundation even for the present day Constitution of the Republic of India insofar as the fundamental linguistic and religious rights of the people of India and the official language policy of India were concerned.

The Madras Congress of 1927 passed a resolution that an All Parties' Conference be summoned to work out principles for the future Constitution of India. Accordingly, an All-Parties' Conference was summoned at Delhi in February and March 1928. The Conference decided that the future Constitution of India be discussed, based on the implementation of the demand for a Full Responsible Government. The question of communal relations and proportionate representation, etc., was also discussed.

There were 25 sittings in the months of the Conference. The third conference met on the 19th of May, 1928, and passed a resolution appointing a committee with Pandit Motilal Nehru as its President to draft the principles of the Constitution of India. There was overwhelming support to the proposal. The All-Parties' Conference met again at Lucknow in August 1928 to consider the Report of the Motilal Nehru Committee. The Conference declared itself in favor of a Dominion Self-Government for India as practiced in Canada, New Zealand, the Irish Free Republic, South Africa, etc.

CALL FOR THE COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE, NOT A DOMINION STATUS

The Constitution and the Report were taken up by the All-India Congress Committee at its sitting in Delhi in November 1928. However, the All India Congress Committee reiterated the goal of Complete National Independence (which was included in the creed of the Congress by a separate resolution in the Madras Congress of 1927), and resolved that the Motilal Nehru Committee Report's proposals were "a great step towards political advance," and generally approved them.

Thus, the proposals contained in the Motilal Nehru Committee Report became more or less the ideas and programs of the Indian National Congress.

In fact, the proposals contained in the Motilal Nehru Report on language and elimination of communal electorates were steadfastly implemented by the Indian National Congress via the instrument of the Constituent Assembly in Free India later on.

Calcutta Congress Resolution in Favor of the Report

Meeting in December 1928 at Calcutta, the Indian National Congress session passed an epoch making resolution recommending the Motilal Nehru Committee Report: This Congress, having considered the Constitution recommended by the All-Parties' Committee Report, welcomes it as a great contribution towards the solution of India's political and communal problems and congratulates the Committee on the virtual unanimity of its recommendations, and, whilst adhering to the resolution relating to Complete Independence passed at the Madras Congress, approves of the Constitution drawn up by the Committee as a great step in political advance, specially as it represents the largest measure of agreement obtained among the important parties in the country.

Subject to the exigencies of the political situation, this Congress will adopt the constitution if it is accepted in its entirety by the British Parliament on or before the 31st December 1929, but in the event of its non-acceptance by the date or its earlier rejection, the Congress will organize a campaign of non-violent non-cooperation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner as may be decided upon.

Consequently with the above, nothing in this resolution shall interfere with the carrying on in the name of the Congress of the propaganda for Complete Independence.

Thus, the Motilal Nehru Committee Report containing the draft constitution became a focal point in the struggle for independence. The draft Constitution, as already noted, is a very important milestone in the evolution of the language policy of the Indian National Congress as well.

Linguistic Re-organization of Indian Provinces - The Question of the Sindh Province, the Role of Religion

The Motilal Nehru Committee appointed by the All-Parties' Conference to consider and determine the principles of the Constitution for India and to frame a Constitution providing for the establishment of a Full Responsible Government, considered also the aspects of fundamental rights and language use in India.

The Committee considered the opposition of Hindus against separating Sind from Bombay and making it a separate province. While language was the primary factor in enabling the Indian National Congress in creating a separate Congress province of Sind in 1920 in course of time, Hindus came to oppose the ultimate creation of the province on communal grounds (the Hindus were in a minority in the Sindh Province). The Committee, however, noted that for the last eight years, since the National Congress made Sind into a separate Congress province, no voice was raised in protest. It is said:

> *It is stated on behalf of the Hindus in Sind and elsewhere that they are strongly opposed to the creation of 'communal' provinces. We agree that the Muslim demand for the separation of Sindh was not put forward in the happiest way. It was based on communalism and it was tacked on irrelevantly to certain other matters with which it had no concern whatsoever. We can understand the Hindu reaction to this. But the manner of putting it forward does not necessarily weaken the merits of a proposal. There is no question of creating a 'communal' province. We have merely to recognize facts as they are. A long succession of events in history is responsible for the distribution of the population of India as it is today. Sind happens to contain a large majority of Muslims. Whether a new province is created or not, Sind must remain a predominantly Muslim area. And, if the wishes of the large majority are not acceded to, it would not be doing violence to the principle of self-determination, but would necessarily result in antagonizing that majority population. No Indian desiring a free India, progressing peacefully and harmoniously, can view this result with equanimity. To say from the larger viewpoint of nationalism that no 'communal' provinces should be created is, in a way,*

equivalent to saying from the still wider international viewpoint that there should be no separate nations. Both these statements have a measure of truth in them. But the staunchest internationalist recognizes that without the fullest national autonomy it is extraordinarily difficult to create the international state. So also without the fullest cultural autonomy, and communalism in its better aspect is culture, it will be difficult to create a harmonious nation. … If, however, there is still some ground for fear, that is a matter for safeguards, not of opposing a just demand (pp. 21-33).

Note that the Indian National Congress applied straight forward the principle of delimitation of provinces on a linguistic basis, even though it would lead to, as in Sind, the creation of a province inhabited predominantly by the Muslims. While, thus, the Indian National Congress took a principled stand, there were people in both the communities, Hindu and Muslim, who looked at the matter not from the point of view of linguistic homogeneity, but only from the dominant ideology of the heterogeneity of religions.

Whereas in the South and throughout the non-Hindustani states, linguistic homogeneity could act effectively to unite peoples of different faiths, in the Hindustani belt, even such well-knit linguistically homogeneous Sindhi speaking community would look at the problem only from the point of view of religious diversity.

RATIONALE FOR LINGUISTIC RE-ORGANIZATION

The Motilal Nehru Committee noted that everyone knew that the distribution of provinces in India had no rational basis. Raising the question, what principles should govern the redistribution of provinces, it suggested the following factors:

Partly geographical and partly economic and financial, but the main considerations must necessarily be the wishes of the people and the linguistic unity of the area concerned. It is well recognized that rapid progress in education as well as in general culture and in most departments of life depends on language. If a foreign language is the medium of instruction, business and affairs and the life of the country must necessarily be stunted.

No democracy can exist where a foreign language is used for these purposes. A democracy must be well informed and must be able to understand and follow public affairs in order to take an effective part in them. It is inconceivable that a democracy can do this if a foreign language is largely used. It becomes essential therefore to conduct the business and politics of a country in a language, which is understood by the masses. So far as the provinces are concerned, this must be the provincial language. We are certainly not against the use of English. [Note the difference in approach to English between Gandhi and Motilal Nehru Committee - Thirumalai.] Indeed from the necessities of the situation we feel that English must, as at present, continue for some time to come to be the most convenient medium for debate in the central legislature. We also believe that a foreign language, and this is likely to be English, is essential for us to develop contacts with the thought and science and life of other countries. We are, however, strongly of the opinion that every effort should be made to make Hindustani the common language of the whole of India, as it is today of half of it. But, granting all this, provincial languages will have to be encouraged and, if we wish the province to make rapid progress, we shall have to get it to do its work in its own language.

If a province has to educate itself and do its daily work through the medium of its own language, it must necessarily be a linguistic area. If it happens to be a polyglot area difficulties will continually arise and the media of instruction and work will be two or even more languages. Hence, it becomes most desirable for provinces to be regrouped on a linguistic basis. Language, as a rule corresponds with a variety of culture, of traditions, and literature. In a linguistic area all these factors will help in the general progress of the province.

The National Congress recognized this linguistic principle 8 years ago and since then, so far as the Congress machinery is concerned, India has been divided into linguistic provinces.

Another principle, which must govern a redistribution of provinces, is the wishes of the people concerned. We, who talk of self-determination on a larger scale cannot, in reason, deny it to a smaller area, provided of course this does not conflict with

any other important principle or vital question. The mere fact that the people living in a particular area feel that they are a unit and desire to develop their culture is an important consideration even though there may be no sufficient or cultural justification for their demand. Sentiment in such matters is often more important than fact.

Thus, we see that the two most important considerations in re-arranging provinces are the linguistic principle and the wishes of the majority of the people. A third consideration, though not of the same importance, is administrative convenience, which would include the geographical position, the economic resources and the financial stability of the area concerned. But administrative convenience is often a matter of arrangement and must as a rule bow to the wishes of the people.

Contrary to the list of fundamental rights earlier resolved by the Indian National Congress, which contained a clause on the right to preserve, maintain, and develop one's own language, script, and culture, apart from religion, the Motilal Nehru report talked only of fundamental rights regarding religion, apart from several others. In other words, the scope and function of culture and language use were removed from the list of fundamental rights and were expected to be safeguarded once the provinces were redistributed based on a linguistic principle. The recognition of the possibility and certainty of a linguistic minority, apart from the religious minority, even in a linguistically reorganized province, did not find a place in the report. Language, culture, and script were thus separated from religion, which, in fact, came to be the basis for the final draft of the present Constitution of India.

Supplementary Report

The draft Constitution presented in the Motilal Nehru Committee Report did not include in it the language provisions, which, quoted above, were presented only in the recommendations of the Committee. However, the Supplementary Report of the Motilala Nehru Committee included the amendments, among others, relating to language. These were as follows:

4. (A) (i) The language of the Commonwealth shall be Hindustani, which may be written either in Nagari or in Urdu character. The use of the English language shall be permitted. (ii) In provinces the principal language of a province shall be the official language of that province. The use of Hindustani and English shall be permitted.

This clause was inserted in the original Report immediately under Clause 4, which dealt with fundamental rights. Another amendment added as regards languages was with regard to the medium of instruction.

FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

The Motilal Nehru Committee Draft Constitution included under clause 4(v) dealing with Fundamental rights had the following: "All citizens in the Commonwealth of India have the right to free elementary education without any distinction of caste or creed in the matter of admission into any educational institutions, maintained or aided by the state, and such right shall be enforceable as soon as due arrangements shall have been made by competent authority," To this, it was added, "Provided that adequate provision shall be made by the State for imparting public instruction in primary schools to the children of members of minorities of considerable strength in the population through the medium of their own language and in script as is in vogue among them."

An explanation was also added to this clause: "Explanation: This provision will not prevent the State from making the teaching of the language of the Commonwealth obligatory in the said schools."

Powers to the States While Extending the Domains of Use for the Language Used at the Centre

Note that the explanation added gives powers to State to teach the language of the Commonwealth (that is, Hindustani in Nagari or Urdu script), as an obligatory language, but no power to teach the principal language (official language) of the province as an obligatory language.

In the language scheme of the Indian National Congress, emphasis had always been on the furtherance of the scope of the language used at the Centre, although the place and importance of the mother tongue and the provincial language had been readily

accepted by it. The draft constitution also provided for the appointment of a Commission consisting of one representative from each province and ….. representatives of the government of the Commonwealth to institute an enquiry into financial aspects as well as linguistic redistribution of the provinces.

The said Commission shall, in conformity with the principles of this Constitution and with the assistance of such Committee or Committees, as it may consider desirable to appoint:

a. Take all necessary steps to constitute Karnataka and Andhra into separate provinces;

b. Take steps to amalgamate the Oriya speaking tracts in the different provinces and constitute this amalgamated area into a separate province if the people of that area are able or are prepared to bear the financial burden, which is incidental to separation;

c. Report on the cases of Kerala and other linguistic areas, which may desire to be constituted into separate provinces;

d. Resettle the boundaries of Assam and Bengal, Behar and Orissa and C.P., Kerala and Karnataka in accordance with the principles recommended by the Committee.

The draft constitution also recommended (in amendments) that the re-distribution of provinces should take place on a linguistic basis on the demand of the majority of the population of the area concerned, subject to financial and administrative considerations.

Resistance to the Acceptance of the Motilal Nehru Report

The Motilal Nehru Committee Report was adopted by the Indian National Congress, but some significant sections in the country, particularly the Muslim leadership, did not agree to the adoption of the Draft Constitution of the Report.

The Concise History of the Indian National Congress, 1885-1985 records:

Although the Nehru Report was a document which dealt with the crucial issues of contemporary politics with catholicity and vision, its specific proposals failed to win the approval of some significant sections of society in India. Soon after the Report was issued, the leaders of the Congress met in Calcutta in

December 1928, to discuss its provisions. The Muslim leaders present at the Calcutta meeting felt that, in view of the plural character of society in India, some of the provisions of the Nehru Report - particularly those recommending a unitary constitution, and the abrogation of communal electorates - would not be acceptable to their constituents. Indeed, in a conference held slightly later, in March 1929, the Muslim leaders presented a radically different prescription for the constitutional future of India. Such leaders envisaged a liberated India as a federal polity, wherein the minorities ,particularly the Muslim community, would protect their interests through the mechanism of separate electorates (Pande 1985: 153-154).

Janab Mohammad Ali Jinnah's Amendments

In fact, Janab Mohammed Ali Jinnah proposed amendments to the proposals of the Motilal Nehru Committee Report, in the Calcutta All Parties' Conference (1928). These amendments, which sought the continuance of a separate electorate for the Muslims, were rejected by the leaders of the Indian National Congress.

This became, indeed, a turning point in the political life of Janab Jinnah, who immediately thereafter brought forward a scheme of 14 points, which subsequently became the plank for the two-nation theory and the ultimate partition of India. He insisted, among other things, that the form of the future constitution should be federal with the residuary powers vested in the provinces (unlike the provisions in the present Indian constitution), that the representation of communal groups should continue to be by means of separate electorates, and that the constitution should embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Muslim culture and for the protection and promotion of Muslim education, language, religion, personal law, and Muslim charitable institutions, and for their due share in the grants-in-aid given by the State, and by the local self-governing bodies.

Note that the provisions demanded by Jinnah in so far as language use was concerned, had already been agreed to, in fact propagated first, by the Indian National Congress, thus proving the fact that language was not going to play an important role in the demands put forth by the All India Muslim League.

The Seed Grows to be a Vibrant Fruit-bearing Tree

Note that, although the Motilal Nehru Committee Report and the Draft Constitution were rejected then, that it had the acceptance of the entire Indian nation was proved by the incorporation of its ideas and suggestions in the present Constitution of India. That the Indian National Congress was solidly behind the Motilal Nehru Committee Report and considered the ideas contained therein as its own was also proved by similar provisions suggested by Gandhi in the Second Round Table Conference in 1931.

Gandhi's Proposals in the Second Round Table Conference, 1931

During the proceedings of the Second Round Table Conference in the year 1931, Gandhi circulated a memorandum, in the second session of the Conference, which demanded that the new Constitution should include a guarantee to the communities concerned, of protection of their culture, language, script, education, profession, and practice of religion and religious endowments, personal law, political, and other rights of minority communities. His views found their place in the rights relating to religion and in the cultural and educational Rights in the Constitution of Independent India.

The sole purpose of these provisions in the Constitution of Independent India is to reassure the minorities that certain special interests of theirs, which they cherish as fundamental to their life, are safe under the Constitution. One special feature of these provisions is that the term "minority" has been given a wider connotation. Here a minority is recognized not only on the basis of religion, but also on the basis of language, script, or culture.

In January 1889, or so the story goes, Motilal Nehru, a 27-year-old lawyer from Allahabad, travelled to the holy town of Rishikesh, weighed down by personal tragedy. Married as a teenager, in keeping with custom, he had soon been widowed, losing both his wife and his first-born son in childbirth. In due course he had married again, an exquisitely beautiful woman named Swarup Rani Kaul. She soon blessed him with another son - but the boy died in infancy. Motilal's own brother Nandlal Nehru then died at the age of 42, leaving Motilal the care of his widow and seven

children. The burden was one he was prepared to bear, but he desperately sought the compensatory joy of a son of his own. This, it seemed, was not to be.

Motilal and his two companions, young Brahmins of his acquaintance, visited a famous yogi renowned for the austerities he practised while living in a tree. In the bitter cold of winter, the yogi undertook various penances which, it was said, gave him great powers. One of the travellers, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, informed the yogi that Motilal's greatest desire in life was to have a son. The yogi asked Motilal to step forward, looked at him long and hard, and shook his head sadly: "you," he declared, "will not have a son. It is not in your destiny." As a despairing Motilal stood crestfallen before him, the other man, the learned Pandit Din Dayal Shastri, argued respectfully with the yogi. The ancient Hindu shastras, he said, made it clear that there was nothing irreversible about such a fate; a great karmayogi like him could simply grant the unfortunate man a boon. Thus challenged, the yogi looked at the young men before him, and finally sighed. He reached into his brass pitcher and sprinkled water from it three times onto the would-be father. Motilal began to express his gratitude, but the yogi cut him short. "By doing this," the yogi breathed, "I have sacrificed all the benefits of all the austerities I have conducted over many generations."

The next day, as legend has it, the yogi passed away.

Ten months later, at 11:30 p.m. on November 14, 1889, Motilal Nehru's wife Swarup Rani gave birth to a healthy baby boy. He was named Jawaharlal ("precious jewel"), and he would grow up to be one of the most remarkable men of the 20th Century.

Jawaharlal Nehru himself always disavowed the story as apocryphal, though it was attributed by many to two of the protagonists themselves - Motilal and Malaviya. Since neither left a first-hand account of the episode, the veracity of the tale can never be satisfactorily determined. Great men are often ascribed remarkable beginnings, and at the peak of Jawaharlal Nehru's career there were many willing to promote a supernatural explanation for his greatness. His father, certainly, saw him from a very early age as a child of destiny, one made for extraordinary success; but as a rationalist himself, Motilal is unlikely to have

based his faith in his son on a yogi's blessing. The child himself was slow to reveal any signs of potential greatness. He was the kind of student usually referred to as "indifferent".

And yet his impact on our country was so great that I have chosen to title my new biography of him Nehru: The Invention of India.

For the first 17 years of India's independence, the paradox-ridden Jawaharlal Nehru - a moody, idealist intellectual who felt an almost mystical empathy with the toiling peasant masses; an aristocrat, accustomed to privilege, who had passionate socialist convictions; an Anglicized product of Harrow and Cambridge who spent over 10 years in British jails; an agnostic radical who became an unlikely protégé of the saintly Mahatma Gandhi - was India. Upon the Mahatma's assassination, Nehru became the keeper of the national flame, the most visible embodiment of India's struggle for freedom. Incorruptible, visionary, ecumenical, a politician above politics, Nehru's stature was so great that the country he led seemed inconceivable without him. A year before his death a leading American journalist, Welles Hangen, published a book entitled After Nehru, Who? The unspoken question around the world was: "after Nehru, what?"

Today, nearly four decades after his death, we have something of an answer to the latter question. As an India still seemingly clad in the trappings of Nehruvianism steps out into the 21st Century, little of Jawaharlal Nehru's legacy appears intact. India has moved away from much of it, and so (in different ways) has the rest of the developing world for which Nehruvianism once spoke. As India nears the completion of the sixth decade of its independence from the British Raj, a transformation - still incomplete - has taken place that, in its essentials, has changed the basic Nehruvian assumptions of post-colonial nationhood.

That is why I undertook my short biography: to examine this great figure of 20th Century nationalism from the vantage point of the beginning of the 21st. Jawaharlal Nehru's life is a fascinating story in its own right, and I have tried to tell it whole, because the privileged child, the unremarkable youth, the posturing young nationalist and the heroic fighter for independence are all inextricable from the unchallengeable Prime Minister and peerless

global statesman. At the same time I have sought to analyse critically the principal pillars of Nehru's legacy to India - democratic institution-building, staunch pan-Indian secularism, socialist economics at home and a foreign policy of non-alignment - all of which were integral to a vision of Indianness that is fundamentally contested today.

Nehru: The Invention of India is not a scholarly work; it is, instead, a reinterpretation - both of an extraordinary life and career and of the inheritance it left behind for every Indian. The very term "Indian" was imbued with such meaning by Nehru that it is impossible to use it without acknowledging a debt: our passports incarnate his ideals. Where those ideals came from, whether they were brought to fulfilment by their own progenitor, and to what degree they remain viable today are the themes of my book. I started it as divided between admiration and criticism as I finished it; but the more I delved into the life, it was the admiration which deepened.

Jawaharlal Nehru's impact on India is too great not to be re-examined periodically. His legacy is ours, whether we agree with everything he stood for or not. What we are today, both for good and for ill, we owe in great measure to one man. That is why his story is not simply history.

2

DESHBANDHU CHITRANJAN DAS

Chittaranjan Das, whose life is a landmark in the history of India's struggle for freedom, was endearingly called 'Deshbandhu' (Friend of the country). Born on November 5, 1870 in Calcutta, he belonged to an upper middle class Vaidya family of Telirbagh in the then Dacca district. His father, Bhuban Moban Das, was a reputed solicitor of the Calcutta High Court. An ardent member of the Brahmo Samaj, he was also well-known for his intellectual and Journalistic pursuits. Chittaranjan's patriotic ideas were greatly influenced by his father's.

After receiving his early education at the London Missionary Society's Institution at Bhowanipore (Calcutta), Chittaranjan passed the entrance examination in 1885 as a private candidate. He graduated from the Presidency College in 1890. He then went to England to compete for the I.C.S.; but he was "the last man out" in his year. Therefore he joined the Inner Temple and was called to the Bar in 1894.

It was Bankim Chandra who partly influenced him in his political ideas. While at the Presidency College, Chittaranjan was a leading figure of the Student's Association; and from Surendranath Banerjea he took his first lessons in Public service and elocution.

In 1894 Das came back to India and enrolled himself as a Barrister of the Calcutta High Court. But he did not get the backing badly needed to make a good start in the profession.

In 1907 he appeared as the defence lawyer of Brahma (bhadhav) Upedhyaya and Bhupendranath Dutta who were

prosecuted for sedition. His abilities as an advocate evoked general admiration, though he did not succeed in baffling the prosecution. The turning point in his career came when he was called upon to appear on behalf of Aurobindo Ghose in the Alipore Bomb Case (1908). It was due to his brilliant handling of the case that Aurobindo was ultimately acquitted. This case brought Das to the forefront professionally and politically.

Chittaranjan was the defence counsel in the Dacca Conspiracy Case (1910-11). He was famed for his handling of both civil and criminal law.

It was, however, not before 1917 that Das came to the forefront of nationalist politics. In that year he was invited to preside over the Bengal Provincial Conference held at Bhowanipore. At the Conference Chittaranjan gave in Bengali his memorable presidential speech, animated by lofty idealism and patriotic fire. Chittranjan's political career was brief but meteoric.

In course of only eight years (1917-25) he rose to all-India fame by virtue of his ardent patriotism, sterling sincerity and oratorical power. His advent into politics in 1917 took place at a crucial moment. He played a significant role in the controversy over the election of Mrs. Annie Besant as President of the Indian National Congress for its Calcutta Session. During this period (1917-18) he also took part in the agitation against the Government policy of internment and deportation under the Defence of India Act. On the eve of the Calcutta Session (1917) of the Congress, he had been on a lecturing tour m Eastern Bengal, addressing large gatherings on Self-Government.

In 1918, both at the Congress special session in Bombay and at the Annual Session in Delhi, Das opposed the scheme of Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms as wholly inadequate and disappointing. The demand for Provincial Autonomy was successfully propounded in the teeth of vehement opposition from Mrs. Besant and others. In 1919 Chittaranjan went to Punjab as a member of the non-official Jallianwala Bagh Enquiry Committee. At the Amritsar Congress (1919) he made the first advocacy of obstruction while opposing the idea of co-operation with the Government in the implementation of the 1919 Reforms.

In 1920 at a special session of the Congress held at Calcutta under the presidency of Lajpat Rai, Gandhiji announced his famous programme of Non-Cooperation. Das sought some changes in it but in vain. He however, had the support of Pal, Malaviya, Jinnah and Mrs. Besant.

Three months later the Congress met at Nagpur where he, however, accepted Gandhiji's lead and came back to Calcutta to renounce his large practice at the Bar. The whole nation was deeply impressed to see this supreme act of self-sacrifice. Besides the Non-Cooperation Movement, the large-scale exodus of the Coolies from the Assam tea garden and the strike of the Assam-Bengal railway employees engaged his attention in 1921.

In its repressive measures the Government declared as illegal the Congress Volunteers' organisation which took a leading part in the boycott of the visit of the Prince of Wales (1921). Deshbandhu decided to defy the arbitrary government order. Deshbandhu himself was arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment. After his release in 1922, he was elected President for the Congress Session at Gaya.

With the suspension of the Non-Cooperation Movement Deshbandhu. endeavoured to give a new orientation to Indian politics through his Council-Entry programme, i.e. "Non-Cooperation from within the Councils". He however met with vehement opposition from the Mahatma and the "No-changer". At the Gaya Congress C. Rajagopalachari led the Council-Entry opposition. His motion being lost, Deshbandu resigned the president-ship.

Thereafter he organised the Swarajya Party within the Congress in collaboration with Motilal Nehru, the Ali brothers, Ajmal Khan, V. J. Patel, Pratap Guha Roy and others. It was initially known as the Congress-Swaraj-Khilafat Party.

In spite of the bitter criticism launched by the "No-changers" like Shyam, Sundar Chakraborty and J. L. Banerjee, the Jalpaiguri Conference was organised by the Swarajists in 1923. Through the efforts of the Swarajists, Maulana Azad was elected President of the Congress Special Session at Delhi, where the programme of Council-Entry was approved. The programme was later confirmed at the Cocanada Session.

Deshbandhu wanted "Swaraj for the masses, not for the classes." He believed in non-violent and constitutional methods for the realisation of national independence. In the economic field, Das stressed the need of constructive work in villages. A champion of national education and vernacular medium, he felt that the masses should be properly educated to participate in the nationalist movement. Chittaranjan also made his mark as a poet and an essayist. His religious and social outlook was liberal. A believer in women's emancipation, he supported the spread of female education and widow re-marriage. An advocate of intercaste marriage, he gave his own daughters in marriage Brahmm and Kayastha families.

Chittaranjan passed away on June 16, 1925 at Darjeeling at the age of 55. Great as a jurist, Chittaranjan was the greatest and most dynamic leader of the then Bengal. Above all, he was an apostle of Indian nationalism.

The 1st quarter of the 20th century was marked as the "AgniYug" of the Indian freedom struggle. The young generation took up firearms and swore vengeance against the oppressive British diplomacy. Chittaranjan Das, a barrister suddenly entered the political scenario fighting to save Aurobindo Ghosh from the hanging noose when he got implicated in the Alipore Bomb Conspiracy Case. His wit and powerful handling of the case was the reason behind Aurobindo's freedom. Born in a well to do Bengali family on 5th Nov 1870, he was highly educated and received a degree in Law from England. Chittaranjan Das whose life is a landmark in the history of India's struggle for Independence, was endearingly called 'Deshbandhu' (Friend of the Nation). meaning "comrade of the nation." He belonged to the renowned Das family of Telirbagh, Bikrampur, Dhaka, now in Bangladesh. He was son of Bhuban Mohan Das, and nephew of the Brahmo social reformer Durga Mohan Das. Among his cousins the better acknowledged were: S.R.Das, Sarala Roy and Lady Abala Bose.

He was the leading figure in Bengal during the Non-Co-operation Movement, and initiated the ban on British clothes. He himself set an example by burning his own European clothes and taking up 'desi' Khadi clothes. With Motilal Nehru, he founded the Swaraj Party to express his non-moderate opinions. Known

to be the mentor of Shubhash Chandra Bose, the imperialistic British administration tried to cool his heels many a times but could not tame his iron resolution and confidence.

He brought out a tabloid named Forward and later changed its given name to Liberty to struggle the British Raj. When the Calcutta Corporation was created, he became its first Mayor. He presided over the Gaya assembly of the Indian National Congress. All the way through his political existence, he was weighed down with sick health but in spite of that, he showed fearlessness, audacity and determinism in increasing up to the British.

He was a supporter of non-violence and legitimate methods for the realization of national freedom, and advocated mutual synchronization and championed the grounds of nationwide education. Particularly Subhash Chandra Bose carried his inheritance onward by his disciples.

Chittaranjan was the defence guidance in the Dacca Conspiracy Case (1910-11). He was renowned for his managing of both civil and criminal bylaw.

Deshbandhu required "Swaraj for the masses, not for the classes." He supposed in non-violent and legitimate methods for the realisation of nationwide independence. In the financial field, Das stressed out the requirement of beneficial work in villages. A victor of national learning and vernacular standard, he felt that the masses should be correctly cultured to contribute in the nationalist movement. Chittaranjan also made his mark as a versifier and an author. His sacred and social attitude was modern. A believer in women's liberation, he supported the increase of female edification and widow re-marriage. A supporter of intercaste marriage, he gave his own daughters in marriage Brahmm and Kayastha families.

Believer of non-violence and constitutional methods for the realisation of national independence, advocate of communal harmony and champion of national education died at the age of 55. He was the source of inspiration to many and so when he met an untimely death on 16th June 1925, Bengal writhed in grief. Though his legacy was carried rightly by Shubhash Chandra Bose, his absence was felt in each step on the way to a revolution.

Chitta Ranjan Das (C R Das) (1870-1925), a landmark figure in the history of India's struggle for freedom, was endearingly called 'Deshbandhu' (Friend of the Country). He was indeed an 'Apostle of Indian Nationalism'. A political leader, lawyer, poet and journalist, C R Das, was born on November 15, 1870 in Calcutta. He was the eldest son of Bhuban Mohan Das and Nistarini Devi. The Das family was one of the most distinguished and cultured in Bengal and belonged to that sect of reformed Hindus known as the 'Brahmo Samaj'. Bhuban Mohan Das was a solicitor by profession and an amateur journalist and poet. It is not therefore surprising that Chitta Ranjan Das's journalistic and poetic leanings were inherited from his father.

After completing his school education at the London Missionary Society's school at Calcutta, C R Das joined the Presidency College and took the Bachelors Degree from Calcutta University in 1890. Even as a student, C R Das was greatly influenced by the political ideals of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. In Presidency College, Calcutta, C R Das was a leading figure of the Students Association and from and from Surendranath Banerjee he took his first lessons in public service and elocution. In 1891, he went to England to take the Indian Civil Service Examination and failed to qualify. He joined the Middle Temple to study Law and was called to the Bar in 1892. During his stay in England he made several political speeches, notably in support of the Parliamentary candidature of Dadabhoy Naoroji, the first Indian to be elected to the House of Commons.

C R Das returned to India in 1893 and commenced his practice as a Barrister in the High Court of Calcutta. But for many years he had little success. From 1893 to 1906, C R Das and his family went through a period of acute financial trouble. Both C R Das and his father Bhuban Mohan Das were financially ruined and had to seek the relief of the Insolvency Court in 1906. What is amazing is that as soon as his circumstances permitted it, C R Das took the unusual procedure of applying for the annulment of the Insolvency Order and paid back the entire amount of his and his father's debts. The debts had become time barred, but C R Das considered himself under a moral obligation to repay them. This act of exemplary honesty, which has very few parallels in any

country, is one of the many instances of the magnanimity and large-heartedness that C R Das showed in all matters connected with money throughout his life. It made a tremendous impression on undivided Bengal and was widely appreciated all over the country.

From 1893 to 1906, the chief events of his life were his marriage in 1897 to Basanti Devi and the publication of the first two volumes of his poems 'Malancha' and the 'Mala'. Dr J C Gosh rightly observes: 'C R Das never regarded poetry as his calling, but there can be no doubt that some of his poems will find an abiding place in Bengali literature. Though very few of his poems touch the highest watermark of genius, there are very few poets in Bengal, leaving out Tagore, whose average performance sustains such a high level as Chitta Ranjan's ? His poems possess the additional interest of a highly illuminating spiritual documentary.'

Chitta Ranjan Das (1870-1925)

As a Lawyer, C R Das first came into prominence in 1908 as Counsel for Defence in the trial of Aurobindo Ghose, the Editor of the 'Bande Mataram'. The partition of Bengal in 1905 had let loose a tremendous wave of nationalist agitation and revolutionary activity and the Government resorted to unusual repressive measures. The Bande Mataram was the foremost nationalist paper of the day, and Aurobindo Ghose was tried on the charge of sedition before the Chief Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta. This was the turning point in his career and this case brought C R Das to the forefront both professionally and politically. Aurobindo Ghose was honourably acquitted.

This is how C R Das concluded his defence of Aurobindo in 1909; it was a unique blend of passion and argument and masterly prose: 'Long after this controversy is hushed in silence, long after this turmoil ceases, long after Aurobindo Ghose is dead and gone, he will be looked upon as the poet of patriotism, as the prophet of nationalism and the lover of humanity. Long after the mortal in him has perished, his words will be echoed and re-echoed across distant seas and lands'. Aurobindo Ghose, the Mother, the Aurobindo Ashram and Pondicherry have become household words in all the continents today as prophesied by C R Das.

The next landmark case which C R Das handled was the Manicktolla Bomb Case, one of the most sensational political trials in modern Indian history. Following a bomb outrage in Muzaffarpur, the police unearthed a bomb factory in Manicktolla, a suburb of Calcutta. 36 Bengali youths, including Aurobindo Ghose and his brother were tried in this case. C R Das endeared himself to the heart of nationalist Bengal. From this time onwards, he became the richest lawyer in India earning a massive amount of more than 50,000 Pounds per year.

C R Das associated himself with the new Nationalist Movement that began with the partition of Bengal and with its two new organs, The New India and Bande Mataram. He also joined the Indian National Congress as a delegate in 1906. He took no active part in politics till 1917, when he was invited to preside over the Bengal Provincial Conference of the Congress Party in Calcutta. His connection with politics which began in this way continued uninterrupted until his death in 1925. His presidential address before the Bengal Provincial Conference was more in the nature of a sentimental rhapsody than a considered political speech. He painted a highly romantic picture of Bengal's golden past and attributed the present suffering of the people to their fall from the spiritual ideals of ancient India and to their blind adoption of the materialist values of the West. He suggested as remedies, village reconstruction, return to the soil and the renouncing of industrialism.

In 1920, at a special session of the Congress held at Calcutta under the Presidency of Lala Lajpat Rai, Mahatma Gandhi announced his famous programme of Non-Cooperation. C R Das proposed some changes in it but in vain. He however had the support of Bipin Chandra Pal, Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Jinnah and Mrs Annie Besant. Three months later, the Congress Party met at Nagpur where C R Das accepted Mahatma Gandhi's leadership and came back to Calcutta to renounce his large practice at the Bar. The whole nation was deeply impressed to see this supreme act of self-sacrifice by C R Das.

When the Prince of Wales came to India in 1921, C R Das took an active part in organising agitation and boycott by the Congress volunteers in Calcutta. C R Das was arrested and sentenced to six

months imprisonment. After his release in 1922, he was elected President of the Indian National Congress Session at Gaya. Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das was introduced to the delegates at Gaya by Mahatma Gandhi. In his Presidential Address, C R Das declared: 'What is freedom? It is impossible to define the term; but one may describe it as that state, that condition, which makes it possible for a nation to realise its own individuality and to evolve its own destiny. The history of mankind is full of stirring stories as to how nations have fought for freedom in order to keep their nationalism and their individuality inviolate and untarnished'. C R Das wanted 'Swaraj' for the masses, not the classes.

Through the efforts of C R Das and the Swarjists, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was elected President of the Congress Special Session at Delhi in the first half of 1923, where the programme of 'Council entry' recommended by C R Das was approved. This proposal of C R Das was later confirmed at the Cocanada Session of the Indian National Congress held in December, 1923.

C R Das believed in non-violent and constitutional methods for the realisation of our national independence. In the economic field, he stressed the need of constructive work in villages. He was a champion of national education in vernacular medium and felt that all the masses should be properly educated to participate in the nationalist movement. His religious and social outlook was liberal. A believer in women's emancipation, he supported the spread of female education and widow re-marriage. An advocate of inter-caste marriage, he gave his own daughters in marriage to Brahmin and Kayastha families.

Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das passed away on June 16, 1925 at Darjeeling at the age of 55. His body was brought down from Darjeeling to Calcutta by train, and a procession, over two miles long and consisting of more than 300,000 men and women with Mahatma Gandhi at their head, followed his body to the cremation ground. In is conception of self-Government he was ahead of his time and regarded it as freedom and well-being, not only for the privileged few, but for the toiling masses of India.

3

Sir Aurobindo: The Forgotten Giant of India's Independence

A huge biography of British statesman Sir Stafford Cripps, has been brought out. Although it is mentioned that if India had accepted in 1943 Sir StattSri Aurobindo was born on the 15th August 1872 in Calcutta, he spent his first years at Rangpur (now in Bangladesh) and at the age of 5 is sent to Loreto Convent school in Darjeeling. His father, who wants him to have a thorough Western education, packs him then to England, where he enters St Paul's School in London in 1884 and King's College, Cambridge in 1890.

Sri Aurobindo is a brilliant student and passes the I.C.S., but "fails" to appear for the riding test and is disqualified. After 13 years in England Sri Aurobindo returned to India on February 6, 1893 at the age of 20. He joined the Baroda State Service from 1897 to early 1906 and taught French and English at the Baroda college, before eventually becoming its Principal. It was at that time that he started writing a series of articles "New lamps for Old" in the Indu Prakash, a Marathi-English daily from Bombay. Sri Aurobindo realised quickly that passive resistance, constitutional agitation "a La Congress", was not the right path to achieve an independent India.

In the true spirit of a yogi, he re-enacted the Baghavad Gita's great message: that violence is sometimes necessary, if it flows from Dharma -and Dharma then was the liberation of India. Thus he began contacting revolutionary groups in Maharashtra and Bengal and tried to co-ordinate their action. At Sri Aurobindo's

initiative, P. Mitter, Surendranath Tagore and Sister Nivedita formed the first Secret Council for revolutionary activities in Bengal. But action was accompanied by inner vision: "While others look upon their country as an inert piece of matter, forests, hills and rivers, I look upon my country as the Mother. What would a son do if a demon sat on her mother's breast and started sucking her blood?..I know I have the strength to deliver this fallen race. It is not physical strength- I am not going to fight with sword or gun, but with the strength of knowledge".

In 1905, the terrible Lord Curzon partitioned Bengal. This divide-and-rule move was meant to break the back of Bengali political agitation and use the East Bengal Muslim community to drive a wedge between Hindus and Muslims, a policy that was to culminate in India's partition in 1947. Bengal responded to its partition with massive and unanimous protests in which many personalities took part, such as Rabindranath Tagore, Surendranath Banerjee, Bepin Chandra Pal... The ideal of Swadeshi, which called for the boycott of British goods, spread widely.

It was at this time that B.C. Pal launched the famous English daily, Bande Mataram; Sri Aurobindo joined it and soon became its editor. Day after day, he jotted down his vision and tried to instil fire and courage in the nation through the pages of Bande Mataram : "Nationalism is not a mere political programme; nationalism is a religion that has come from God; Nationalism is a creed which you shall have to live.. If you are going to be a nationalist, if you are going to assent to this religion of Nationalism, you must do it in the religious spirit. You must remember that you are the instruments of God... Then there will be a blessing on our work and this great nation will rise again and become once more what it was in the days of spiritual greatness". But Sri Aurobindo had to fight against the Congress Moderates, who, it must be remembered came out openly for complete independence only in 1929, of whom he said: "There is a certain section of India which regards Nationalism as madness and they say Nationalism will ruin the country.. They are men who live in the pure intellect and they look at things purely from the intellectual point of view"....

Sri Aurobindo was very clear in what was demanded of a leader of India: "What India needs at the moment is the aggressive

virtues, the spirit of soaring idealism, bold creation, fearless resistance, courageous attack". But if the Moderates dismissed Sri Aurobindo as a "mystic", Lord Minto, then Viceroy of India, made no such mistake, calling him, "the most dangerous man we have to deal with at present". Thus Sri Aurobindo was arrested on May 2d 1908, following a failed assassination attempt on a British judge by a nationalist belonging to his brother's secret society. Sri Aurobindo spent a year in jail, which proved to be the turning point of his life as he went through the whole gamut of spiritual realisations.

When he came out, the nationalist movement had nearly collapsed and he set about giving it a fresh impetus, launching a new English weekly, the Karmayogin, as well as a Bengali weekly, Dharma. This following is an extract from his famous Uttarpara speech, where he speaks of his spiritual experiences in jail: "When it is said that India shall rise, it is the Santana Dharma that shall rise. When it is said that India shall be great, it is the Santana Dharma that shall be great… But what is the Hindu religion? It is the Hindu religion only, because the Hindu nation has kept it, because in this peninsula it grew up in the seclusion of the sea and the Himalayas, because in this sacred and ancient land it was given as a charge to the Aryan race to preserve through the ages. That which we call the Hindu religion is really the eternal religion, because it is the universal religion which embraces all others. If a religion is not universal, it cannot be eternal.... Santana Dharma IS nationalism"…

In mid-February 1910, news reached that the British had again decided to arrest Sri Aurobindo and close down the offices of the Karmayogin. By that time Sri Aurobindo had the vision that India was free, for the external events are always preceded by an occult happening, sometimes long before they become "fait accompli". Sri Aurobindo then received an "Adesh", an inspiration that he must go to Pondichery, then under French rule. He settled there, with a few disciples, the number of whom slowly swelled, until it became known as the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. He wrote all his masterpieces and devoted the remaining of his life to bringing down what he called the "supramental manifestation on the earth". The great Sage passed away on 5 December 1950.

A Dream Taking Shape

Sri Aurobindo was born on August 15, 1872 in Calcutta. His father, Dr.K.D.Ghose, sent him to England for education. He studied at St. Paul's in London and at King's College, Cambridge.

During a brilliant academic career, he mastered not only English, but also Greek, Latin and French and became familiar with German. Italilan and Spanish.

In 1893, at 21, Sri Aurobindo returned to India. The moment he set foot on Indian soil at Apollo Bunder in Bombay, a vast peace and calm descended upon him. It was the way Mother India welcomed Sir Aurobindo with a spiritual experience.

Sir Aurobindo is a rare, multi-faceted personality.

Romain Rolland, an eminent French savant, thinker and writer, said, "Sri Aurobindo is one of the greatest thinkers of modern India. He is the most complete synthesis achieved upon the present between genius of the West and the East."

Sri Aurobindo led and guided the national revolutionary movement for Bengal. His revolutionary writings gave the nationalist movement a spiritual force. It also exposed him to the wrath of the British Government. He was implicated in the famous Alipore bomb blast Case and spent a year in jail as an undertrial prisoner. He said, after release, "the only result of the wrath of the British Government was that I found God." In the jail, he spent almost all his time in reading, in intensive meditation and the practice of Yoga.

In 1910, in answer to an inner call, Sri Aurobindo withdrew from the political field and sailed for Pondicherry to devote himself entirely to his evolving spiritual mission. In 1914, after four years of silent yoga, he started the philosophical monthly `Arya', through which he revealed his message for humanity: man's divine destiny (The Life Divine), the path to its realisation (The Synthesis of Yoga), the realisation of oneness of mankind (The Ideal of Human Unity); the inner meaning and significance of Indian spirituality and civilisation (The Foundation of Indian Culture) on the Veda, the Upanishad, essays on the Gita, the future poetry.

His supreme work in poetry is `Savitri', a legend and a symbol,an epic of nearly 24,000 lines in blank verse.

On the eve of India's Independence, Sri Aurobindo was requested by All India Radio to broadcast a message to the nation. Significantly, India attained her Independence on August 15, 1947 the 75th birthday of Sri Aurobindo. In a message broadcast on that day, Sri Aurobindo said, "I take this coincidence, not as a fortuitous accident, but as the sanction and seal of the Divine Force that guides my step on the work with which I began life."

In his prophetic speech, Sri Aurobindo spoke of his five dreams for India and for the world. Although, at one time, they were impractical, looking back he saw all the world movements he had hoped for were coming to fruition. The first of these dreams was a revolutionary movement which would create a free and united India. "The nationalist movement won us Independence. But unity seems elusive". He said, "Unity must and will be achieved, for it is necessary for the greatness of India's future."

> *"Another dream was for the resurgence and liberation of the peoples of Asia and her return to her great role in the progress of human civilisation."*

Since Sri Aurobindo's address to the nation, Asia has become ever more powerful in the world order. North and South Korea, Cambodia, Indonesia and Malaysia are some of the nations which have attained freedom since 1947. South Korea and Japan are economic role-models today. The Middle East too, is flourishing. The power of the vast, technologically advanced and politically mature peoples of Asia is being recognised by the world.

> *"The third dream was a world-union forming the outer basis of a fairer, brighter and nobler life for all mankind. That unification of the human world is under way: there is an imperfect initiation organised but struggling against tremendous difficulties. But the momentum is there and it must inevitably increase and conquer."*

The collapse of the Soviet Union means that the world is no longer divided into two power-blocs: communist and capitalist. The pressure to hegemony is less. The chance of world peace greater.

The United Nations in action in Somalia and Ethiopia, as well as the United Nations conference on the environment, held at

Brazil are signs of change. Possibilities now exist for the nations of the world to work together for a better life for all.

The economic and political unification of Europe will be another step towards a united world. The Non-aligned Movement is another example of the urge towards unification that exists today. And the increasing tendency for South-South cooperation in economic and sociological matters is a recognition of the power of solidarity.

Man has seen that well-being is interdependent. The planet is bound by a common thread -- we have a common destiny. "For unification is a necessity of Nature... without it the freedom of the small nations may be at any moment in peril and the life even of the large and powerful nations insecure... A new spirit of oneness will take hold of the human race."

> *"Another dream, the spiritual gift of India to the world has already begun. India's spirituality is entering Europe and America in a ever-increasing measure. That movement will grow."*

The spirituality that Sri Aurobindo spoke of is distinct from any organised religion bound in the narrow limits of a creed, cult or ceremonial ritual. It is a search for the divine in all of us which allows infinite freedom, variation and universality. It is not an ascetic rejection or moving away from life but a seeking after the eternal, an attempt to manifest Him or It in all re spects of life.

> *"The final dream was a step in evolution which would raise man to a higher and larger consciousness and begin the solution of the problems which have perplexed and vexed him."*

Although the mind is the highest faculty developed in man, it has not been able to solve the basic problems of man. Human nature has not changed. What is needed is a new step in consciousness, an ascent to a level beyond the mind into the supermind. At the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry, this is the dream which is now taking shape. Here, the endeavour is to mould the complete man -- the integral development of mind, soul and body.

One who can evolve to greater oneness with the divine consciousness. One who can raise mankind along with him and bring a state of grace upon earth. Sri Aurobindo had a great vision for India --as a nation that would lead the world towards spiritualilty. For human destiny, he felt, lay in the synthesis of spiritual and material life "whether or how fasr this hope will be justified depends upon the new and free India."

There is hope that Sri Aurobindo's visions will be proved completely true. There is hope in the ending of the Cold War. There is hope in the movements for unification, there is hope in the growing power of the Asian nations. Hope in the concern all over the world for people in a state of famine or civil war.

But most of all, there is hope within each one of us. In the children growing up in a world where the barriers are coming down. In the search for self-findings and self-realisation that each one of us goes through. In the increasing opportunity for self-actualisation. The road is open for us to travel towards unity with the Super mind. For the divine life to establish itself upon earth.

In the words of the Mother, the Spiritual Collaborator of Sri Aurobindo: "The world is preparing for epic change. Will you help?"

The year was 1909. The long trial in Allipore jail in Bombay had reached its penultimate stages. The charge was conspiracy to murder a British judge. Defence Counsel, young Chitranjan Das, who was himself destined to play an important role in the Indian struggle for independence, had come to the end of his closing address. His words were prophetic:

> *"Long after this controversy is hushed in silence, long after this turmoil and this agitation have ceased, long after the man in the dock is dead and gone, he will be looked upon as the poet of patriotism, as the prophet of nationalism and the lover of humanity: long after he is dead and gone his words will be echoed and re-echoed, not only in India but across distant seas and lands."*

The man in the dock was Sri Aurobindo Ghose [OrObin´dO gOsh] . He was acquitted of the charge laid against him but his brother who was charged with him, was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment in the Andaman Islands. Many years later, in 1951, Aurobindo passed away in Pondicherry. Today, the ashram

in which he lived in Pondicherry, attracts thousands of visitors from all over the globe. Aurobindo's life and work continue to influence and direct and his words continue to echo and re echo, not only in India, but across distant seas and lands.

STUDENT DAYS

Aurobindo was born in 1872 near Calcutta. He was educated in England from the early age of seven and returned to India in 1893, having passed with distinction the Classical Tripos examinations at Cambridge University. Though he had sat for the Indian Civil Service examination and passed it, he failed to turn up for the compulsory horse riding test. Even as a student at Cambridge, his thoughts had turned to India and the struggle for independence. In Aurobindo's earliest manuscripts, dated 1890-92, are these notes:

> *"The patriot who offers advice to a great nation in an era of change and turmoil, should be very confident that he has something worth saying before he ventures to speak; but if he can really put some new aspect on a momentous question or emphasise any side of it that has not been clearly understood, it is his bounden duty, however obscure he may be, to ventilate it."*

REFORMISM OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

The Indian National Congress was founded in 1885 by a retired British civil servant, A.O.Hume and was following the path which had been set for it by its founder, who had declared:

> *"Every adherent of the Congress, however noisy in declamations, however bitter in speech, is safe from burning bungalows and murdering Europeans and the like. His hopes are based upon the British nation and he will do nothing to invalidate these hopes and anger that nation."*

Hume was perceptive but not entirely original. Many years earlier, in 1835, the English poet and historian, Thomas B. Macaulay, who served as President of a Committee on Public Instruction in Bengal, recommended for India (in his Minute on Education), a thoroughly English educational system which 'would create a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour but English

in taste, in morals and in intellect' and it was through such a class that the British sought to perpetuate their rule. In a letter to his father in 1836, Macaulay added, "...It is my belief that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolater among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence. And this will be effected without any efforts to proselytize, without the smallest interference with religious liberty, by natural operation of knowledge and reflection. I heartily rejoice in the project."

But, Aurobindo Ghose, a Bengali, returning to India, after a 14 year education in England, first at St.Pauls, London and thereafter at Kings College, Cambridge University, quickly set about proving both Hume and Macaulay wrong.

Aurobindo's first political writing in 1893, was a sustained and reasoned attack on the reformism of the Congress leaders. It was a time when the educated youth of India were becoming increasingly restive at the failure of the path of petitioning and pleading as a way of achieving freedom. Education has a way of widening horizons which some teachers do not entirely anticipate. Aurobindo wrote in 1893 in the Indu Prakash:

> *"The Congress is altogether too unwieldy a body for any sort of executive work.. Not content with using a banner as a banner, we have actually caught up the staff of it with a view to breaking our enemy's heads...*

Popular orators, who carry the methods of the bar into politics, are very fond of telling people that the Congress has habituated us to act together. Well, that is not quite correct; there is not the slightest evidence to show that we have at all learned to act together; the one lesson we have learned is to talk together, and that is a rather different thing...

Our appeal, the appeal of every high souled and self respecting nation, ought not to be to the British sense of justice, but to our own reviving sense of manhood, to our own sincere fellow feeling - so far as it can be called sincere - with the silent suffering people of India. I am sure that eventually the nobler part of us will prevail, - that when we no longer obey the dictates of a veiled self interest, but return to the profession of a large and genuine patriotism, when we cease to hanker after the soiled crumbs

which England may cast to us from her table, then it will be to that sense of manhood, to that sincere fellow feeling that we shall finally and forcibly appeal."

And, Aurobindo concluded:

"I again call on those nobler spirits among us who are working erroneously, it may be, but with incipient or growing sincerity, to divert their strenuous effort from the promotion of narrow class interests, from silly squabbles about offices and salaried positions... into that vaster channel through which alone the healing waters may be conducted to the lips of their ailing and tortured country."

"Capital period of my intellectual development"

The years from 1892 onwards were years of much study and inward searching for Sri Aurobindo. He earned his living by working in the Baroda state service, initially in the revenue department and later as a teacher of English. They were years of preparation. He read voraciously. He learnt his mother tongue, Bengali, for the first time. He mastered Sanskrit so that he may read the Upanishads in the original. But many years later, he remarked:

"The capital period of my intellectual development was when I could see clearly that what the intellect said might be correct and not correct, that what the intellect justified was true and its opposite was also true. I never admitted a truth in the mind without simultaneously keeping it open to the contrary of it.. And the first result was that the prestige of the intellect was gone."

Aurobindo had reached the frontiers of the mind and was concerned with exploring that frontier. It was an evolutionary process which led him to the practise of yoga in the early 1900s. But he declared that a yoga which required him to give up the world was not for him. He was, as always, stubborn in his honesty:

"The agnostic was in me, the atheist was in me, the sceptic was in me and I was not absolutely sure that there was a God at all... I felt that there must be a mighty truth somewhere in this yoga... So when I turned to the yoga and resolved to practise it and find out if my idea was right, I did it in this spirit and with

this prayer to Him, 'If thou art, then Thou knowest my heart. Thou knowest that I do not ask for Mukti (liberation), I do not ask for anything which others ask for, I ask only for strength to uplift this nation, I ask only to be allowed to live and work for this people whom I love."

AUROBINDO'S INVOLVEMENT WITH THE MILITANT MOVEMENT

Sri Aurobindo came to be increasingly involved in the freedom struggle. These were the years of the heavy handed approach of Lord Curzon who served as the Viceroy of British India. The Indian National Congress itself failed to provide effective leadership. It was torn between the so called 'moderates' who sought to persevere in the path of reformism, of discussion and dialogue, of pleading and persuasion and the 'militants' to whom these were methods which merely perpetuated British rule.

And nowhere was the militancy greater than in Bengal which had a strong literary and university tradition. Aurobindo maintained contacts with many of the militants and his brother Barinda was engaged directly in revolutionary work. In 1903, at the instance of his brother, he wrote the pamphlet 'Bhavani Mandir'. It was meant to train people for revolutionary struggle. He wrote:

"Is it love, enthusiasm, Bhakthi that is wanting? These are ingrained in the Indian nature, but in the absence of Shakthi we cannot concentrate, we cannot direct...Bhakthi is the leaping flame, Shakthi is the fuel. If the fuel is scanty, how long can the flame endure?...Many of us, utterly overcome by Tamas, the dark and heavy demon of inertia, are saying nowadays that it is impossible, that India is decayed, bloodless and lifeless, too weak ever to recover. It is a foolish and idle saying. No man or nation need perish unless he deliberately chooses extinction... For what is a nation?...It is not a piece of earth, nor a figure of speech, nor a fiction of the mind. It is a mighty Shakthi composed of all the millions of units that make up the nation."

The British response to the rising militancy of the educated Hindus of Bengal was predictable. On the one hand they used the strong arm of the law but they attempted to avoid action which may lead to the birth of martyrs. They refrained from using the

British army because that would easily lead to a confrontation between "them" and "us". They preferred to use the Police which was manned mainly by Indians themselves. On the other hand the British sought to undermine the solidarity of the movement by re drawing the boundaries of Bengal and partitioning it in such a way that the Hindu Bengalis would not constitute a majority in either of the two new provinces. In the words of Lord Curzon, 'Bengal divided, will fall'. The partition was announced in 1904 and became a legal fact in 1905.

"I am a victim of three insanities"

In August 1905, Aurobindo set down some of his innermost thoughts in a letter to his wife. He wrote:

" Possibly by this time you have realised that the person with whom your lot is cast is a very peculiar gentleman...You know how people regard uncommon opinion, extraordinary attempts, and high aspirations. They call that madness...I am a victim of three insanities, if I may call them so.

My first insanity consists in my firm belief that the qualifications, higher education, learning and wealth that God has given me, all belong to Him. We have a right to spend only as much as is required for the upkeep of the family and is absolutely needed. What remains ought to be rendered back to God. If I spend all that I have on myself, for my pleasures, for luxury, then I am a veritable thief ...

The second madness that has taken hold of me is the determination, happen what may, to see God, face to face, whatever the means. I have determined to tread the path that leads to God, however difficult it might be. The Hindu knows that path lies in one's own body, in one's own mind. Siddhi or fulfilment is bound to come to everyone who follows the path.....

My third madness is with regard to Mother India. I look upon India as my Mother, I am devoted to her, I worship her. If somebody mounts on the chest of his mother and to drink her blood, what does her son do? Does he sit down for meals and settle down with a calm and a quiet mind to enjoy life with his wife and children? Or does he run to the succour of his suffering mother?"

Violence and Non Violence

In early 1906, Aurobindo left Baroda for Calcutta and the following two years were years of intense political activity. His writings in the weekly 'Bande Mataram' captured the imagination of all India. The then British editor of the Statesman of Calcutta wrote many years later in 1950, in the Manchester Guardian:

"...It was in 1906, shortly after Curzon's retirement, that Sri Aurobindo and his friends started Bande Mataram...it was full of leading and special articles written in English with brilliance and pungency not hitherto attained in the Indian press. It was the most effective voice of what we then called nationalist extremism.."

The partition of Bengal did not resolve the problem created by a rising Bengali nationalism. The actions of the British escalated the confrontation between the ruler and the ruled. A swadeshi movement was launched coupled with a boycott of English textiles and this met with some initial success. Bande Mataram put before the nation a programme of boycott, swadeshi, national education and passive resistance. But to Aurobindo, that which he called 'passive resistance', was a method to be followed only if the circumstances were appropriate. He wrote:

"To the ideal we have at heart there are three paths, possible or impossible.

Petitioning which we have so long followed, we reject as impossible - the dream of timid experience, the teaching of false friends who hope to keep us in perpetual subjection, foolish to reason, false to experience.

Self development by self help which we now propose to follow, is a possible though uncertain path, never yet attempted under such difficulties, but one which must be attempted, if for nothing else yet to get free of the habit of dependence and helplessness...

Parallel to this attempt, the policy of organised resistance forms the old traditional way of nations which we must also tread. It is a vain dream to suppose that what other nations have won by struggle and battle, by suffering and tears of blood, we shall be allowed to accomplish easily, without terrible sacrifices, merely by spending the ink of the journalist and petition framer and the breath of the orator.

Petitioning will not bring us one yard nearer freedom; self development will not easily be suffered to advance to its goal. For self development spells the doom of the ruling despotism, which must therefore oppose our progress with all the art and force of which it is the master; without organised resistance we could not take more than a few faltering steps towards self emancipation.

But resistance may be of many kinds - armed revolt, or aggressive resistance short of armed revolt, or defensive resistance whether passive or active; the circumstances of the country and the nature of the despotism from which it seeks to escape must determine what form of resistance is best justified and most likely to be effective. "

Aurobindo did not rule out violent resistance as a way of achieving freedom. He wrote:

"The present circumstances in India seem to point to passive resistance as our most natural and suitable weapon. We would not for a moment be understood to base this conclusion upon any condemnation of other methods as in all circumstances criminal and unjustifiable.

It is the common habit of established governments and especially those which are themselves oppressors, to brand all violent methods in subject peoples and communities as criminal and wicked. When you have disarmed your slaves and legalised the infliction of bonds, stripes, and death on any one of them who may dare to speak or act against you, it is natural and convenient to try and lay a moral as well as a legal ban on any attempt to answer violence by violence...

But no nation yet has listened to the cant of the oppressor when itself put to the test, and the general conscience of humanity approves the refusal...Liberty is the life breath of a nation; and when life is attacked, when it is sought to suppress all chance of breathing by violent pressure, then any and every means of self preservation becomes right and justifiable...It is the nature of the pressure which determines the nature of the resistance."

At about this time, there were more than 40,000 unemployed graduates in Bengal and out of a number of organisations of

young men arose the Bengali militant movements. They were inspired in particular by the exploits of the Italian national leader, Guiseppe Mazzini and some of them were sent to Europe to learn the art of making bombs. There were hundreds of cases of so called 'dacoity'. There were raids on banks and on armouries.

There were in existence several rival groups which were in conflict with each other. The British were compelled to move to suppress the movements by bringing to bear the full force of the state apparatus. At the same time the British were not unmindful that too heavy a hand may prove to be counter productive. Lord Minto who had succeeded Lord Curzon as Viceroy was addressed by Lord Morley, the then Secretary of State for India:

"I must confess to you that I am watching with the deepest concern and dismay the thundering sentences that are being passed for sedition etc. We must keep order, but excess of severity is not the path to order. On the contrary it is the path to the bomb."

The Incalculable Power of Martyrdom

However, despite the concerns of Lord Morley, many of the leaders of the militant movement were killed and others were convicted and sentenced to prison. Martyrs were born. Aurobindo wrote of the power of martyrdom in Bande Mataram in 1907. The article was entitled, 'The Strength of an Idea' and his words continue to retain their eloquence, and their relevance today.

"...the physical power and organisation behind the insurgent idea are ridiculously small, the repressive force so overwhelmingly, impossibly strong that all reasonable prudent moderate minds see the utter folly of resistance and stigmatise the attempt of the idea to rise as an act of almost criminal insanity.

But the man with the idea is not reasonable, not prudent, not moderate. He is an extremist, a fanatic. He knows that in the fight with brute force the spirit is bound to conquer...He knows too that his own life and the lives of others are of no value, that they are mere dust in the balance compared with the life of his idea.

The idea or sentiment is at first confined to a few men whom their neighbours and fellow countrymen ridicule as lunatics or hare brained enthusiasts. But it spreads and gathers adherents who catch the fire of the first missionaries and creates its own preachers and then its workers who try to carry out its teachings in circumstances of almost paralysing difficulty. The attempt to work brings them into conflict with the established power which the idea threatens and there is persecution.

The idea creates its martyrs. And in martyrdom there is an incalculable spiritual magnetism which works miracles. A whole nation, a whole world catches the fire which burned in a few hearts; the soil which has drunk the blood of the martyr imbibes with it a sort of divine madness which it breathes into the heart of all its children, until there is but one overmastering idea, one imperishable resolution in the minds of all besides which all other hopes and interests fade into significance and until it is fulfilled, there can be no peace or rest for the land or its rulers.

It is at this moment that the idea creates its heroes and fighters, whose numbers and courage defeat only multiplies and confirms until the idea militant has become the idea triumphant. Such is the history of the idea, so invariable in its broad outlines that it is evidently the working of a natural law."

The British Carrot and the British Stick

The British combined the attack on the militants with the offer of some constitutional reforms. It was the usual mixture of carrot and stick. The Morley Minto proposals of 1907 constituted the carrot. It was a legal frame which sought to perpetuate colonial rule with the assistance of collaborators from the ruled. It was the tried and tested gambit of a colonial power when called upon to contend with a rising national consciousness - a gambit which is not without significance today.

The Morley Minto reforms sought to set up provincial legislatures where the majority would be nominees of the British government and a central Council with a few Indians, again nominated by the British. Aurobindo's response was immediate and caustic. He wrote in Bande Mataram in June 1907, under the title 'Comic Opera Reforms':

"Mr.Morley has made his pronouncement and a long expectant world may now go about its ordinary business with the satisfactory conviction that the conditions of political life in India will be precisely the same as before... We find it impossible to discuss Mr.Morley's reforms seriously, they are so impossibly burlesque and farcical. Yet they have their serious aspect. They show that British despotism, like all despotisms in the same predicament, is making the time honoured, ineffectual effort to evade a settlement of the real question by throwing belated and now unacceptable sops to Demogorgnon."

Aurobindo, did not shrink from attacking a sanctimonious morality which equated the violence of the oppressor with the violence of those who sought to escape from that oppression. In 1908 he wrote the article entitled 'The Morality of the Boycott":

"Ages ago there was a priest of Baal who thought himself commissioned by God to kill all who did not bow the knee to him. All men, terrified by the power and ferocity of the priest, bowed down before the idol and pretended to be his servants; and the few who refused had to take refuge in hills and deserts. At last, a deliverer came and slew the priest and the world had rest. The slayer was blamed by those who placed religion in quietude and put passivity forward as the ideal ethics, but the world looked upon him as an incarnation of God.

A certain class of mind shrinks from aggressiveness as if it were sin. Their temperament forbids them to feel the delight of battle and they look on what they cannot understand as something monstrous and sinful. 'Heal hate by love', 'drive out injustice by justice', 'slay sin by righteousness' is their cry. Love is a sacred name but it is easier to speak of love than to love. The love which drives out hate is a divine quality of which only one man in a thousand is capable. A saint full of love for all mankind possesses it.... but the mass of mankind does not and cannot rise the height.

Politics is concerned with masses of mankind and not with individuals. To ask masses of mankind to act as saints, to rise to the height of divine love and practise it in relation to their adversaries or oppressors is to ignore human nature. It is to set a premium on injustice and violence by paralysing the hand of the deliverer when raised to strike. The Gita is the best answer

to those who shrink from battle as a sin, and aggression as lowering morality...

Justice and righteousness are the atmosphere of political morality, but the justice and righteousness of a fighter, not of the priest. Aggression is unjust only when unprovoked; violence, unrighteous when used wantonly or for unrighteous ends. It is a barren philosophy which applies a mechanical rule to all actions, or takes a word and tries to fit all human life into it."

AUROBINDO IN PRISON

These words were written for publication in the Bande Mataram but the manuscript was seized by the Police. The article was produced as an exhibit in the Alipore conspiracy case in May 1908. Sri Aurobindo together with about thirty others, including his brother, were charged with conspiracy to murder a British judge who had acquired notoriety for the manner in which he dealt with Indians who were brought before him. The bomb intended for the judge, killed instead, his wife and child. Sri Aurobindo remained on remand for more than a year. It was a period of intense reflection and meditation. He said later:

> *"...What happened to me during that period I am not impelled to say, but only this that day after day He showed me his wonders and made me realise the utter truth of the Hindu religion. I had many doubts before that. I was brought up in England amongst foreign ideas and an atmosphere entirely foreign. About many things in Hinduism I had once been inclined to believe that they were imaginations... But now day after day, I realised in the mind, I realised in the heart, I realised in the body the truths of the Hindu religion. They became living experiences to me, and things were opened to me which no material science could explain."*

Sri Aurobindo's stay in prison marked a turning point in his personal evolution. It also represented a turning point in the development of the Indian freedom struggle. After his acquittal he found that the British had successfully broken the back of the resistance movement. The path of 'passive resistance' coupled with a tacit acceptance (and justification) of direct violence had failed to mobilise a successful resistance movement. There was an

inherent contradiction which dissipated strength. The ink of the journalist had not proved to be much more effective than the pen of the petition drawer. The bomb in the hand of the militant had not proved much more effective than the breath of the orator.

The repressive power of the state prevailed over both. Almost all the leaders of the freedom movement were either in jail or in self imposed exile.

Famous Uttarpara Speech after Release from Prison

Aurobindo expressed his feelings in the famous Uttarpara speech, soon after his release from prison:

> *"It is I, this time who have spent one year in seclusion, and now that I come out I find all changed. One who always sat by my side (Tilak) and was associated in my work is a prisoner in Burma; another is in the north rotting in detention... I looked around for those to whom I had been accustomed to look for counsel and inspiration. I did not find them. There was more than that.*
>
> *When I went to jail the whole country was alive with the cry of Bande Mataram... when I came out of jail I listened for that cry, but there was instead a silence. a hush had fallen on the country and men seemed bewildered... No man seemed to know which way to move, and from all sides came the question, 'What shall we do next? What is there that we can do?' I too did not know which way to move, I too did not know what was next to be done."*

Although, to use his own words, he 'did not know what was next to be done', he sought to somehow marry the larger vision that he had seen whilst in prison, with the desire that remained in him that he should participate in the struggle for Indian freedom. He ended his Uttarapara speech with these words:

> *"I spoke once before with this force in me and I said then that this movement is not a political movement and that nationalism is not politics but a religion, a creed, a faith. I say it again today, but I put it in another way. I say no longer that nationalism is a creed, a religion, a faith; I say that it is the Sanatana Dharma which for us is nationalism. This Hindu nation was born with the Sanatana Dharma, with it moves and with it*

grows. When the Sanatana Dharma declines, then the nation declines, and if the Sanatana Dharma were capable of perishing, with the Sanatana Dharma it would perish. The Sanatana Dharma, that is nationalism. This is the message that I have to speak to you."

For Aurobindo Politics was too much - and too Little

So it was that Aurobindo, on his return from prison, did not disengage himself from political activity. Though Bande Mataram had ceased publication, undeterred, Aurobindo started a new weekly called the Karma Yogin. The name was perhaps of some significance - it recognised that it was through the path of work that freedom for the individual and for India would be achieved.

He sought to resuscitate the flagging political zeal of those around him, but he did not succeed. Not surprisingly, the Congress moderates moved to accept the Morley Minto reforms as the only way out of the debacle and this further demoralised the political atmosphere. Many years later, whilst describing his experience of the ebb of political enthusiasm, Aurobindo remarked:

"Even when all the leaders were jailed and some deported, we continued to hold our political meetings at College Square. But in all there used to be about a hundred persons, and that too mostly passers by. And I had the honour to preside over several such meetings!"

Great expectations that are not fulfilled are usually followed by an even greater despondency and all that remained was a sullen silence.

Aurobindo had begun to see more clearly the direction ahead and in 1909, he wrote more positively about the path of non violence than he had done earlier:

"We have told the people that there is a peaceful means of achieving independence in whatever form we aspired to it. We have said that by self help, by passive resistance we can achieve it... Passive resistance means two things.

It means first that in certain matters we shall not cooperate with the government until it gives us what we consider our rights. Secondly if we are persecuted, if the plough of repression is passed over us, we shall meet it, not by violence, but by suffering, by passive resistance, by lawful means.

We have not said to our young men, 'when you are repressed, retaliate' - we have said 'suffer'... We are showing the people of this country, in passive resistance, the only way in which they can satisfy their legitimate aspiration without breaking the law and without resorting to violence."

But, Aurobindo did not see himself leading the Indian people along this path of non violence which he continued to describe as "passive" resistance. Aurobindo had sought to appeal to the 'reviving sense of manhood' of the Indian people and it was perhaps, not surprising that he found it difficult to identify himself with a path which he continued to perceive as 'passive'.

His involvement with the miltant movement may have clouded his perception of the reality - that true non violence was not 'passive' at all but that it was resistance of the most active kind - resistance which demanded even greater courage and resoluteness than a violent struggle.

Again, it may well be that Aurobindo did not see himself as the person who was equipped to lead the struggle that was ahead. He had begun to look upon the Indian freedom struggle as a part of a wider struggle of man to know himself and become free and it was to this broader vision that he addressed himself in the years that followed. On the 30th of July 1909, Aurobindo wrote an open letter to his countrymen. He said:

"... all great movements wait for their God sent leader, the willing channel of His force and only when he comes, move forward triumphantly to their fulfillment ... therefore the nationalist party, the custodians of the future, must wait for the man who is to come."

It was Aurobindo's resignation from the political arena. In a way, as Dalton has remarked in a recent book, for Aurobindo, politics proved to be not enough - as well as too much.

The Individual and the Collective

The open letter heralded Aurobindo's move from British India to French Pondicherry in early 1910 and it was there that Aurobindo

was to spend the remaining 40 years of his life in an inner exploration which sought to join the inner with the outer in an Integral Yoga. Every inside has an outside and every outside has an inside - and the relationship between the two is intrinsic and dynamic. He wrote:

"It is wrong to demand that the individual subordinate himself to the collectivity or merge in it because it is by its most advanced individuals that the collectivity progresses and they can really advance only if they are free. But it is true that as the individual advances spiritually, he finds himself more and more united with the collectivity and All."

Aurobindo sought the unity with the outer in the exploration of the inner and his epic poem Savithri expressed in blank verse, in language which captures our minds and lingers in our hearts, the path of that exploration. But to the end, he remained true to his statement that a yoga that secured a personal salvation was not for him.

Arrival of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

The Indian national movement did await the arrival of the man who would be the willing channel of the force that would lead the movement to its eventual triumph. A few years later in 1916 that man came to India in the shape and form of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and the force was the force of Ahimsa or Truth. If Sri Aurobindo may be regarded as a raja yogi, then Mahatma Gandhi was the karma yogi par excellence. To Mahatma Gandhi, life was an experiment with truth. He sought everywhere a coincidence of word and deed

To Mahatma Gandhi non violence was not passive resistance. It was something very active. Non violence was not something that was useful and convenient in the situation that the Indian people found themselves - a tactic to be adopted if the circumstances were suitable. It was to him the only way. In South Africa, he had declared without equivocation: 'Yes, my friends, I too am prepared to die for a cause, but there is no cause for which I am prepared to kill.'

Non violence was not something to be tried and if found wanting, given up. In a liberation struggle, violence does not come

after non violence fails. True non violence requires greater courage and resolve than resort to arms. Non violence is not petitioning and pleading. The force of non violence springs from the sathyagrahi's stubborn willingness to suffer - it is this which serves to blunt the power that flows from the oppressor's gun.

Chitranjan Das and Subhas Chandra Bose

Aurobindo also inspired the young lawyer, Chitranjan Das who had defended him in the Alipore trial. Chitranjan Das, later known as Deshabandu became a fearless fighter for India's freedom and served as President of the Indian National Congress in 1920. Another young Bengalee, Subhas Chandra Bose followed Aurobindo's footsteps by spurning the Indian Civil Service after having passed the examination in 1920 from Fitzwilliam Hall in Cambridge University. Subhas wrote to his brother Sarat on 22 September 1920, in words reminiscent of Aurobindo:

"You will readily understand my mental condition as I stand on the threshold of what the man-in-the-street would call a promising career. There is much to be said in favour of such service. It solves once for all what is the paramount problem for each of us - the problem of bread and butter... But for a man of my temperament who has been feeding on ideas which might be called eccentric - the line of least resistance is not the best line to follow... it is not possible to serve one's country in the best and fullest manner if one is chained to the (Indian) Civil Service. In short, national and spiritual aspirations are not compatible with obedience to Civil Service conditions."

Subhas Chandra Bose wrote again to his brother on 23 February 1921:

"The principle of serving an alien bureacracy is one to which I cannot reconcile myself. Besides the first step towards equiping oneself for public service is to sacrifice all worldly interests - to burn one's boats as it were - and devote oneself whole heartedly to the national cause... The illustrious example of Aurobindo Ghosh looms large before my vision. I feel that I am ready to make the sacrifice which that example demands me."

Subhas Chandra Bose joined Deshabandu Chitranjan Das in India and in 1921-22 they were both imprisoned by the British in

the same Alipore jail which had witnessed Aurobindo's trial some 12 years earlier.

> *"I had the privilege to be in the same jail with him (Deshabandu Chitranjan Das) for eight months in 1921-22. For a couple of months we were in the Presidency Jail occupying two adjacent celss, and the remaining six months we were in one big hall... in the Alipore Central Jail... That Swaraj in India meant primarily the uplift of the masses... was a matter of conviction with the Deshabandu... Ofcourse, thirty years ago Swami Vivekananda spoke in that vein in his book entitled 'Bartaman Bharat', but that message of Swamiji was never echoed from our political platforms...*
>
> *....another reason for the extraordinary influence which he (Deshabandu) wielded.... was (his) constant experience that through all his actions he had succeeded in establishing Vaishanavism which was very much part of his religious life. Thanks to a fine synthesis between his ideal and his practical life, his entire being was getting progressively saturated with this synthesis... As a result of inner purity, which follows the pursuit of action without caring for results, man loses the awareness of the ego. And when the ego is transcended he becomes an instrument for the expression of the Divine Will.." (Subhas Chandra Bose, letter dated 20 February 1926 to Hemendra Nath Dasgupta - The Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Edited by Sisir K.Bose and Sugata Bose, Oxford University Press, 1997)*

Sri Aurobindo, in a significant sense inspired both the spritual and militant aspects of India's struggle for freedom. He was a worthy son of a Bengal which had also given birth to Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore - and that is not to mention Satyendranath Bose.

Relevance of Aurobindo's Early Political Life

Sri Aurobindo's relatively short political life and his brilliant political writings exemplify a stage in the Indian freedom struggle - a stage that is common to many struggles of an oppressed people who seek to break the oppressive structures of their society. It is a stage which reflects the reaction of a people who see the failure

of the path of petitioning and pleading to achieve anything at all except a perpetuation of the rule by the established ruler.

In the physical sciences, Newton's third law declares that every action has an equal and opposite reaction. It would seem that this is a special instance of a law of more general applicability. Every action has a reaction and in the dynamic relation between action and reaction lies the elusive reality - as elusive as the reality that the Heisenberg uncertainty principle postulates.

The failure of pleading and petitioning leads a people to respond by embracing the path of violence. "There is no purpose in talking to our oppressors, we do not trust them - the only language that they will understand is the language of the gun." Initially the violence is sporadic and occurs where the oppression is felt most.

The subsequent course of the struggle depends as much on the response of the ruler as on the efforts of the leaders of the struggle. If the ruler seeks to crush the violence with even greater repression, he will find that violence begets further violence and that he is on a steep and slippery slope, without knowing when or how to stop.

The sporadic violence leads to organised resistance and may lead to a full fledged national liberation struggle. On the other hand if the leaders of the struggle fail to mobilise the broad support of the people who seek change, then such leaders will lack the strength to take the struggle forward - and the armed resistance may collapse.

Often, the ruler, seeks to temper the stick with the carrot. This comes in the form of so called "constitutional reforms" or greater popular participation in government. Again, the ruler may provide bread and rice in the belief that if the economic problems are addressed, discontent can be stifled.

It was perhaps, thinking not dissimilar to this which reportedly led Marie Antoinette to offer cake to the revolutionaries of Paris. But the point of the story is that usually, there is not enough cake on offer to go around. The ruler cannot change structures in such a way as to threaten the well being of his political supporters and erode his own power base. He cannot kick the ladder on which

he climbed to power and this serves as a constraint on the carrots he can offer. His past moulds his present and influences his future. The British in India were not unmindful of the dilemma that they faced. But, it was not always possible to maintain effective control of responses on the field of action.

Lord Morley in London was able to take a more detached view than Lord Minto who was the Viceroy on the spot, in more ways than one. In the end, the British did successfully handle the 'terrorist' response in Bengal, without allowing it to become a broad based armed struggle for independence.

Unlike the Dutch in Indonesia or the French in Indo China , the British did not use 'excessive' repression. They coupled the police action with an effort to secure the support of influential sections of the Indian middle-class including the wealthier peasants in the rural areas. They recognised, as Gandhi too had seen, that India was rural India and that it was there that the struggle lay.

Without Gandhi, the British may have found it increasingly difficult to prevent the rise of a violent struggle for independence on the lines of the freedom movements in Indonesia, China and some parts of Africa. Without Gandhi, the British may have found it difficult to resist a Subhas Chandra Bose. At the same time, the British dependence on a calibrated response without excessive overt repression rendered it possible for Gandhi to mobilise the Indian people in the way that he did during the period from 1916 to 1947.

But having said that it is also necessary to recognise that Gandhi was not a convenient pragmatist engaged in the search for political power. To him, Ahimsa had a force which must prevail, whatever the circumstances. It was this that made Gandhi reiterate more than once that even against the worst type of oppression, non violence will and must succeed. In the end, it was Gandhi who mobilised the Indian people on the lines that Aurobindo had sometimes written about:

"Man is of less terrestrial mould than some would have him to be. He has an element of the divine which the politician ignores. The practical politician looks to the position at the moment and imagines that he has taken everything into consideration. He has indeed studied the surface and the immediate surroundings, but he has missed what lies beyond material vision. He has left out of account the divine, the incalculable in man, that element which upsets the calculations of the schemer and disconcerts the wisdom of the diplomat."

India becomes Free on Aurobindo's Birthday

It was an independence struggle which culminated in 1947. Forty years earlier, in June 1907, Sri Aurobindo had written in Bande Mataram:

"...The idea of a free and united India has been born and arrived at full stature in the land of Rishis, and the spiritual force of a great civilisation of which the world has need is gathering at its back. Will England crush these ideas with ukases and coercion laws? Will she even kill them with maxims and siege guns? But the eyes of the wise men have been sealed so that they should not see and their minds bewildered so that they should not understand. Destiny will take its appointed course until the fated end..."

Destiny did take its appointed course until the fated end and in the moving words of Jawaharlal Nehru, India kept 'her tryst with destiny', on the 15th of August 1947 - and, appropriately enough it was the seventy fifth birthday of Sri Aurobindo. In the end, we are reminded again of the words of Chitranjan Das at the trial in Allipore Jail in 1909:

"Long after this controversy is hushed in silence, long after this turmoil and this agitation have ceased, long after the man in the dock is dead and gone, he will be looked upon as the poet of patriotism, as the prophet of nationalism and the lover of humanity: long after he is dead and gone his words will be echoed and re-echoed, not only in India but across distant seas and lands."

Sri Aurobindo - Letter to His Wife, Mrinalini Devi

30 August 1905

Dearest Mrinalini

I have received your letter of the 24th August. I am sorry to learn that the same affliction has fallen once more upon your

parents. You have not written which of the boys has passed away from here. But then what can be done if the affliction comes? This is a world in which when you seek happiness, you find grief in its heart, sorrow always clinging to joy. That rule touches not only the desire of children, but all worldly desires. To offer, with a quiet heart, all happiness and grief at the feet of God is the only remedy. […]

Now I will write the other thing of which I spoke before. I think you have understood by now that the man with whose fate yours has been linked is a man of a very unusual character. Mine is not the same field of action, the same purpose in life, the same mental attitude as that of the people of today in this country. I am in every respect different from them and out of the ordinary. Perhaps you know what ordinary men say of an extraordinary view, an extraordinary endeavour, an extraordinary ambition. To them it is madness; only, if the madman is successful in his work then he is called no longer a madman, but a great genius. But how many are successful in their life's endeavour?

Among a thousand men, there are five or six who are out of the ordinary and out of the five or six one perhaps successful. Not to speak of success, I have not yet even entirely entered my field of work. There is nothing then for you but to consider me mad. And it is an evil thing for a woman to fall into the hands of a mad fellow. For woman's expectations are all bound up in worldly happiness and sorrow. A madman will not make his wife happy, he can only make her miserable.

The founders of the Hindu religion understood this very well. They loved extraordinary characters, extraordinary endeavours, extraordinary ambitions. Madman or genius, they respected the extraordinary man. But all this means a terrible plight for the wife, and how could the difficulty be solved? The sages fixed upon this solution; they told the woman, "Know that the only mantra for womankind is this: 'The husband is the supreme guru.'[Up to this point the translation follows an early version by Barindra Kumar Ghose which was seen and revised lightly by Sri Aurobindo. The rest of the translation is new.] The wife shares the dharma [law of conduct] of her husband. She must help him, counsel him, encourage him in whatever work he accepts as his dharma. She should regard him as her god, take joy in his joy, and feel sorrow in his unhappiness. It is for a man to choose his work; the woman's part is to give help and encouragement."

Now, the point is this. Are you going to choose the path of the Hindu religion or follow the ideal of the new culture? Your marriage to a madman is the result of bad karma in your previous lives. It is good to come to terms with one's fate, but what sort of terms will they be? Will you also dismiss your husband as a madman on the strength of what other people think? A madman is bound to run after his mad ways. You cannot hold him back; his nature is stronger than yours. Will you then do nothing but sit in a corner and weep? Or, will you run along with him; try to be the mad wife of this madman, like the queen of the blind king who played the part of a blind woman by putting a bandage across her eyes? For all your education in a Brahmo school, you are still a woman from a Hindu home. The blood of Hindu ancestors flows in your veins. I have no doubt you will choose the latter course.

I have three madnesses. The first one is this. I firmly believe that the accomplishments, genius, higher education and learning and wealth that God has given me are His. I have a right to spend for my own purposes only what is needed for the maintenance of the family and is otherwise absolutely essential. The rest must be returned to God. If I spend everything for myself, for my pleasure and luxury, I am a thief. The Hindu scriptures say that one who receives wealth from God and does not give it back to Him is a thief. So far, I have given two annas to God and used the other fourteen annas for my own pleasure; this is the way I have settled the account, remaining engrossed in worldly pleasures. Half my life has been wasted - even the beast finds fulfilment in stuffing his own belly and his family's and catering to their happiness.

I have realised that I have been acting all this time as an animal and a thief. Now I realise this and am filled with remorse and disgusted with myself. No more of all this. I renounce this sin once and for all. What does giving to God mean? It means to spend on good works. The money I gave to Usha or to Sarojini causes me no regret. To help others is a sacred duty; to give

protection to those who seek refuge is a yet greater sacred duty. But the account is not settled by giving only to one's brothers and sisters. In these dark days the whole country is seeking refuge at my door. I have three hundred million brothers and sisters in this country. Many of them are dying of starvation and the majority just manage to live, racked by sorrow and suffering. They too must be helped.

What do you say, will you come along with me and share my ideal in this respect? We will eat and dress like ordinary men, buying only what is truly needed and offering the rest to God:this is what I propose to do. My purpose can be fulfilled, once you give your approval, once you are able to accept the sacrifice. You have been saying, "I have made no progress." Here I have shown you a path towards progress. Will you take this path?

My second madness has only recently seized me. It is this: by whatever means I must have the direct vision of God. Religion these days means repeating the name of God at any odd hour, praying in public, showing off how pious one is. I want nothing of this. If God exists, there must be some way to experience His existence, to meet Him face to face. However arduous this path is, I have made up my mind to follow it. The Hindu religion declares that the way lies in one's own body, in one's own mind. It has laid down the rules for following the way, and I have begun to observe them. Within a month I have realised that what the Hindu religion says is not false. I am experiencing in myself the signs of which it speaks. Now I want to take you along this way. You will not be able to keep step with me, for you do not have the requisite knowledge. But there is nothing to prevent you from following behind me. All can attain perfection on this path, but to enter it depends on one's own will. Nobody can drag you onto it. If you consent to this, I shall write more about it.

My third madness is that while others look upon their country as an inert piece of matter - a few meadows and fields, forests and hills and rivers - I look upon my country as the Mother. I adore Her, I worship Her as the Mother. What would a son do if a demon sat on his mother's breast and started sucking her blood? Would he quietly sit down to his dinner, amuse himself with his wife and children, or would he rush out to deliver his mother?

I know I have the strength to deliver this fallen race. It is not physical strength, - I am not going to fight with sword or gun, - but the strength of knowledge.

The power of the Kshatriya is not the only one; there is also the power of the Brahmin, the power that is founded on knowledge. This feeling is not new in me, it is not of today. I was born with it, it is in my very marrow. God sent me to earth to accomplish this great mission. The seed began to sprout when I was fourteen; by the time I was eighteen the roots of the resolution had grown firm and unshakable. After listening to what my aunt said, you formed the idea that some wicked people had dragged your simple and innocent husband onto the bad path. But it was this innocent husband of yours who brought those people and hundreds of others onto that path - be it bad or good - and will yet bring thousands and thousands of others onto that same path. I do not say that the work will be accomplished during my lifetime, but it certainly will be done.

Now I ask you, what are you going to do in this connection? The wife is the shakti, the strength of her husband. Will you be Usha's disciple and go on repeating the mantras of Sahib-worship? Will you diminish the strength of your husband by indifference or redouble it by your sympathy. and encouragement? You will say, "What can an ordinary woman like me do in these great matters? I have no strength of mind, no intelligence, I am afraid to think about these things." But there is an easy way out. Take refuge in God. Enter once the path of God-realisation; He will soon make good your deficiencies. Fear gradually leaves one who takes refuge in God. And if you can put your trust in me, if you can listen to me alone and not to all and sundry, I can give you my own strength; that will not diminish my strength but increase it. We say that the wife is the husband's shakti, his strength. This means that the husband's strength is redoubled when he sees his own image in his wife and hears an echo of his own high aspirations in her.

Will you remain like this for ever: "I shall put on fine clothes, have nice things to eat, laugh and dance and enjoy all the pleasures"? Such an attitude cannot be called progress. At the present time the life of women in this country has taken this

narrow and contemptible form. Give up all this and follow after me. We have come to this world to do God's work; let us begin it.

You have one defect in your nature. You are much too simple. You listen to anything anyone might say. Thus your mind is for ever restless, your intelligence cannot develop, you cannot concentrate on any work. This has to be corrected. You must acquire knowledge by listening to one person only. You must have a single aim and accomplish your work with a resolute mind. You must ignore the calumny and the ridicule of others and hold fast to your devotion.

There is another defect, not so much of your personal nature, as of the times. The times are such in Bengal that people are incapable of listening to serious things in a serious manner. Religion, philanthropy, noble aspirations, high endeavour, the deliverance of the country, all that is serious, all that is high and noble is turned to ridicule.

People want to laugh everything away. At your Brahmo school, you picked up a little of this fault. Bari also had it; all of us are tainted by this defect to some extent. It has grown in surprising measure among the people of Deoghar. This attitude must be rejected with a firm mind.

You will be able to do it easily. And once you get into the habit of thinking, your true nature will blossom forth. You have a natural turn towards doing good for others and towards self-sacrifice. The one thing you lack is strength of mind. You will get that through worship of God.

This is the secret of mine I wanted to tell you. Do not divulge it to anybody. Ponder calmly over these matters. There is nothing to be frightened of, but there is much to think about. To start with, you need do nothing but meditate on the Divine each day for half an hour, expressing to Him an ardent desire in the form of a prayer. The mind will get prepared gradually. This is the prayer you are to make to Him: "May I not be an obstacle in the path of my husband's life, his aim, his endeavour to realise God. May I always be his helper and his instrument." Will you do this?

Yours

Unity and British Rule

It is a common cry in this country that we should effect the unity of its people before we try to be free. There is no cry which is more plausible, none which is more hollow.

What is it that we mean when we talk of the necessity of unity? Unity does not mean uniformity and the removal of all differences.

There are some people who talk as if unity in religion, for instance, could not be accomplished except by uniformity. But uniformity of religion is a psychical impossibility forbidden by the very nature of the human mind.

So long as men differ in intellect, in temperament, in spiritual development, there must be different religions and different sects of the same religion. The Brahmo Samaj was set on foot in India by Rammohan Roy with the belief that this would be the one religion of India which would replace and unite the innumerable sects now dividing our spiritual consciousness.

But in a short time this uniting religion was itself rent into three discordant sects, two of which show signs of internal fissure even within their narrow limits; and all these divisions rest not on anything essential but on differences of intellectual constitution, variety of temperament, divergence of the lines of spiritual development.

The unity of the Hindu religion cannot be attained by the destruction of the present sects and the substitution of a religion based on the common truths of Hinduism.

It can only be effected if there is, first, a common feeling that the sectarian differences are of subordinate importance compared with the community of spiritual truths and discipline as distinct from the spiritual truths and discipline of other religions, and, secondly, a common agreement in valuing and cherishing the Hindu religion in its entirety as a sacred and inalienable possession. This is what fundamentally constitutes the sentiment of unity, whether it be religious, political or social.

There must be the sense of a community in something dear and precious which others do not possess; there must be an acute

sense of difference from other communities which have no share in our common possession; there must be a supreme determination to cherish, assert and preserve our common possession from disparagement and destruction.

But the sentiment of unity is not sufficient to create unity; we require also the practice of unity. Where the sentiment of unity exists and the practice does not, the latter can only be acquired by a common effort to accomplish one great, common and all-absorbing object.

The first question we have to answer is - can this practical unity be accomplished by acquiescence in foreign rule?

Certainly, under foreign rule a peculiar kind of uniformity of condition is attained. Brahmin and Sudra, aristocrat and peasant, Hindu and Mahomedan, all are brought to a certain level of equality by equal inferiority to the ruling class. The differences between them are trifling compared with the enormous difference between all of them and the white race at the top.

But this uniformity is of no value for the purposes of national unity, except in so far as the sense of a common inferiority excites a common desire to revolt against and get rid of it. If the foreign superiority is acquiesced in, the result is that the mind becomes taken up with the minor differences and instead of getting nearer to unity disunion is exaggerated. This is precisely what has happened in India under British rule.

The sentiment of unity has grown, but in practice we are both socially and politically far more disunited and disorganised than before the British occupation. In the anarchy that followed the decline of the Moghul, the struggle was between the peoples of various localities scrambling for the inheritance of Akbar and Shahjahan. This was not a vital and permanent element of disunion. But the present disorganisation is internal and therefore more likely to reach the vitals of the community.

This disorganisation is the natural and inevitable result of foreign rule. A state which is created by a common descent, real or fictitious, by a common religion or by common interests welding together into one a great number of men or group of men, is a natural organism which so long as it exists has always within it

the natural power of revival and development. But as political science has pointed out, a state created by the encampment of a foreign race among a conquered population and supported in the last resort not by any section of the people but by external force, is an inorganic state. The subject population, it has been said, inevitably becomes a disorganised crowd. Consciously or unconsciously the tendency of the intruding body is to break down all the existing organs of national life and to engross all power in itself.

The Moghul rule had not this tendency because it immediately naturalised itself in India. British rule has and is forced to have this tendency because it must persist in being an external and intruding presence encamped in the country and not belonging to it.

It is doubtful whether there is any example in history of an alien domination which has been so monstrously ubiquitous, inquisitorial and intolerant of any centre of strength in the country other than itself as the British bureaucracy.

There were three actual centres of organised strength in pre-British India - the supreme ruler, Peshwa or Raja or Nawab reposing his strength on the Zemindars or Jagirdars; the Zemindar in his own domain reposing his strength on his retinue and tenants; and the village community independent and self-existent.

The first result of the British occupation was to reduce to a nullity the supreme ruler, and this was often done, as in Bengal, by the help of the Zemindars. The next result was the disorganisation of the village community. The third was the steady breaking-up of the power of the Zemindar with the help of a new class which the foreigners created for their own purposes - the bourgeois or middle class.

Unfortunately for the British bureaucracy it had in order to get the support and assistance of the middle class to pamper the latter and allow it to grow into a strength and develop organs of its own, such as the Press, the Bar, the University, the Municipalities, District Boards, etc.

Finally the situation with which British statesmen had to deal was this: - the natural sovereigns of the land helpless and

disorganised, the landed aristocracy helpless and disorganised, the peasantry helpless and disorganised, but a middle class growing in strength, pretensions and organisation.

British statesmanship following the instinctive and inevitable trend of an alien domination, set about breaking down the power it had established in order to destroy the sole remaining centre of national strength and possible revival. If this could be done, if the middle class could be either tamed, bribed or limited in its expansion, the disorganisation would be complete. Nothing would be left of the people of India except a disorganised crowd with no centre of strength or means of resistance.

It was in Bengal that the middle class was most developed and self-conscious; and it was in Bengal therefore that a quick succession of shrewd and dangerous blows was dealt at the once useful but now obnoxious class.

The last effort to bribe it into quietude was the administration of Lord Ripon. It was now sought to cripple the organs through which this strength was beginning slowly to feel and develop its organic life. The Press was intimidated, the Municipalities officialised, the University officialised and its expansion limited. Finally the Partition sought with one blow to kill the poor remnants of the Zemindar's power and to influence and to weaken the middle class of Bengal by dividing it. The suppression of the middle class was the recognised policy of Lord Curzon.

After Mr. Morley came to power, it was, we believe, intended to recognise and officialise the Congress itself if possible. Even now it is quite conceivable, in view of the upheaval in Bengal and the Punjab, that an expanded Legislature with the appearance of a representative body but the reality of official control, may be given not as a concession but as a tactical move.

The organs of middle class political life can only be dangerous so long as they are independent. By taking away their independence they become fresh sources of strength for the Government - of weakness for the class which strives to find in them its growth and self-expression.

The Partition opened the eyes of the threatened class to the nature of the attack that was being made on it; and the result was

a widespread and passionate revolt which has now spread from Bengal to the Punjab and threatens to break out all over India. The struggle is now a struggle for life and death.

If the bureaucracy conquers, the middle class will be broken, shattered perhaps blotted out of existence; if the middle class conquers, the bureaucracy are not for long in the land. Everything depends on the success or failure of the middle class in getting the people to follow it for a common salvation.

They may get this support by taking their natural place as awakeners and leaders of the nation; they may get it by the energy and success with which they wage their battle with the bureaucracy.

In Eastern Bengal, for instance, the aid of a few Mahomedan aristocrats has enabled the bureaucracy to turn a large section of the Mahomedan masses against the Hindu middle class, and the educated community is fighting with its back to the wall for its very existence. If it succeeds under such desperate circumstances, even the Mahomedan masses will eventually follow its leading.

This process of political disorganisation is not so much a deliberate policy on the part of the foreign bureaucracy, as an instinctive action which it can no more help than the sea can help flowing. The dissolution of the subject organisation into a disorganised crowd is the inevitable working of an alien despotism.

Sri Aurobindo on the Strength of an Idea in Bande Mataram, June 1907

The mistake which despots, benevolent or malevolent, have been making ever since organised states came into existence and which, it seems, they will go on making to the end of the chapter, is that they overestimate their coercive power, which is physical and material and therefore palpable, and underestimate the power and vitality of ideas and sentiments. A feeling or a thought, Nationalism, Democracy, the aspiration towards liberty, cannot be estimated in the terms of concrete power, in so many fighting men, so many armed police, so many guns, so many prisons, such and such laws, ukases, and executive powers.

But such feelings and thoughts are more powerful than fighting men and guns and prisons and laws and ukases. Their beginnings

are feeble, their end is mighty. But of despotic repression the beginnings are mighty, the end is feeble.

Thought is always greater than armies, more lasting than the most powerful and best-organised despotisms. It was a thought that overthrew the despotism of centuries in France and revolutionised Europe. It was a mere sentiment against which the irresistible might of the Spanish armies and the organised cruelty of Spanish repression were shattered in the Netherlands, which brought to nought the administrative genius, the military power, the stubborn will of Aurangzebe, which loosened the iron grip of Austria on Italy.

In all such instances the physical power and organisation behind the insurgent idea are ridiculously small, the repressive force so overwhelmingly, impossibly strong that all reasonable, prudent, moderate minds see the utter folly of resistance and stigmatise the attempt of the idea to rise as an act of almost criminal insanity. But the man with the idea is not reasonable, not prudent, not moderate. He is an extremist, a fanatic. He knows that his idea is bound to conquer, he knows that the man possessed with it is more formidable, even with his naked hands, than the prison and the gibbet, the armed men and the murderous cannon. He knows that in the fight with brute force the spirit, the idea is bound to conquer.

The Roman Empire is no more, but the Christianity which it thought to crush, possesses half the globe, covering "regions Caesar never knew". The Jew, whom the whole world persecuted, survived by the strength of an idea and now sits in the high places of the world, playing with nations as a chess-player with his pieces.

He knows too that his own life and the lives of others are of no value, that they are mere dust in the balance compared with the life of his idea. The idea or sentiment is at first confined to a few men whom their neighbours and countrymen ridicule as lunatics or hare-brained enthusiasts. But it spreads and gathers adherents who catch the fire of the first missionaries and creates its own preachers and then its workers who try to carry out its teachings in circumstances of almost paralysing difficulty. The attempt to work brings them into conflict with the established power which the idea threatens and there is persecution. The idea

creates its martyrs. And in martyrdom there is an incalculable spiritual magnetism which works miracles. A whole nation, a whole world catches the fire which burned in a few hearts; the soil which has drunk the blood of the martyr imbibes with it a sort of divine madness which it breathes into the heart of all its children, until there is but one overmastering idea, one imperishable resolution in the minds of all beside which all other hopes and interests fade into insignificance and until it is fulfilled, there can be no peace or rest for the land or its rulers.

It is at this moment that the idea begins to create its heroes and fighters, whose numbers and courage defeat only multiplies and confirms until the idea militant has become the idea triumphant. Such is the history of the idea, so invariable in its broad lines that it is evidently the working of a natural law.

But the despot will not recognise this superiority, the teachings of history have no meaning for him. He is dazzled by the pomp and splendour of his own power, infatuated with the sense of his own irresistible strength. Naturally, for the signs and proofs of his own power are visible, palpable, in his camps and armaments, in the crores and millions which his tax-gatherers wring out of the helpless masses, in the tremendous array of cannon and implements of war which fill his numerous arsenals, in the compact and swiftly-working organisation of his administration, in the prisons into which he hurls his opponents, in the fortresses and places of exile to which he can hurry the men of the idea.

He is deceived also by the temporary triumph of his repressive measures. He strikes out with his mailed hand and surging multitudes are scattered like chaff with a single blow; be hurls his thunderbolts from the citadels of his strength and ease and the clamour of a continent sinks into a deathlike hush; or he swings the rebels by rows from his gibbets or mows them down by the hundred with his mitraileuse and then stands alone erect amidst the ruin he has made and thinks, "The trouble is over, there is nothing more to fear. My rule will endure for ever; God will not remember what I have done or take account of the blood that I have spilled."

And he does not know that the fiat has gone out against him,

"Thou fool! this night shall thy soul be required of thee." For to the Power that rules the world one day is the same as fifty years. The time lies in His choice, but now or afterwards the triumph of the idea is assured, for it is He who has sent it into men's minds that His purposes may be fulfilled.

The story is so old, so often repeated that it is a wonder the delusion should still persist and repeat itself. Each despotic rule after the other thinks,

"Oh, the circumstances in my case are quite different, I am a different thing from any yet recorded in history, stronger, more virtuous and moral, better organised. I am God's favourite and can never come to harm."

And so the old drama is staged again and acted till it reaches the old catastrophe. The historic madness has now overtaken the British nation in the height of its world-wide power and material greatness. In Egypt, in India, in Ireland the most Radical Government of modem times is bracing itself to a policy of repression. It thinks England has only to stamp her foot and all the trouble will be over.

Yet only consider how many ideas are arising which find in British despotism their chief antagonist. The idea of a free and self-centred Ireland has been reborn and the souls of Fitzgerald and Emmett are reincarnating. The idea of a free Egypt and the Pan Islamic idea have joined hands in the land of the Pharaohs.

The idea of a free and united India has been born and arrived at full stature in the land of the Rishis, and the spiritual force of a great civilisation of which the world has need is gathering at its back. Will England crush these ideas with ukases and coercion laws? Will she even kill them with maxims and siege-guns? But the eyes of the wise men have been sealed so that they should not see and their minds bewildered so that they should not understand. Destiny will take its appointed course until the fated end.

Sri Aurobindo - Uttarpara Speech

When I was asked to speak to you at the annual meeting of your Sabha, it was my intention to say a few words about the

subject chosen for today, the subject of the Hindu religion. I do not know now whether I shall fulfill that intention; for as I sat here, there came into my mind a word that I have to speak to you, a word that I have to speak to the whole of the Indian Nation. It was spoken first to myself in jail and I have come out of jail to speak it to my people.

It was more than a year ago that I came here last. When I came I was not alone; one of the mightiest prophets of Nationalism sat by my side. It was he who then came out of the seclusion to which God had sent him, so that in the silence and solitude of his cell he might hear the word that He had to say. It was he that you came in your hundreds to welcome. Now he is far away, separated from us by thousands of miles.

Others whom I was accustomed to find working beside me are absent. The storm that swept over the country has scattered them far and wide. It is I this time who have spent one year in seclusion, and now that I come out I find all changed. One who always sat by my side and was associated in my work is a prisoner in Burma; another is in the north rotting in detention.

I looked round when I came out, I looked round for those to whom I had been accustomed to look for counsel and inspiration. I did not find them. There was more than that. When I went to jail the whole country was alive with the cry of Bande Mataram, alive with the hope of a nation, the hope of millions of men who had newly risen out of degradation. When I came out of jail I listened for that cry, but there was instead a silence.

A hush had fallen on the country and men seemed bewildered; for instead of God's bright heaven full of the vision of the future that had been before us, there seemed to be overhead a leaden sky from which human thunders and lightning rained. No man seemed to know which way to move, and from all sides came the question, "What shall we do next ? What is there that we can do?"

I too did not know which way to move, I too did not know what was next to be done. But one thing I knew, that as it was the Almighty Power of God which had raised that cry, that hope, so it was the same Power which had sent down that silence. He who was in the shouting and the movement was also in the pause

and the hush. He has sent it upon us, so that the nation might draw back for a moment and look into itself and know His will. I have not been disheartened by that silence because I had been made familiar with silence in my prison and because I knew it was in the pause and the hush that I had myself learned this lesson through the long year of my detention.

When Bepin Chandra Pal came out of jail, he came with a message, and it was an inspired message. I remember the speech he made here. It was a speech not so much political as religious in its bearing and intention. He spoke of his realisation in jail, of God within us all, of the Lord within the nation, and in his subsequent speeches also he spoke of a greater than ordinary force in the movement and a greater than ordinary purpose before it.

Now I also meet you again, I also come out of jail, and again it is you of Uttarpara who are the first to welcome me, not at a political meeting but at a meeting of a society for the protection of our religion. That message which Bepin Chandra Pal received in Buxar jail, God gave to me in Alipore. That knowledge He gave to me day after day during my twelve months of imprisonment and it is that which He has commanded me to speak to you now that I have come out.

I knew I would come out. The year of detention was meant only for a year of seclusion and of training. How could anyone hold me in jail longer than was necessary for God's purpose ? He had given me a word to speak and a work to do, and until that word was spoken I knew that no human power could hush me, until that work was done no human power could stop God's instrument, however weak that instrument might be or however small. Now that I have come out, even in these few minutes, a word has been suggested to me which I had no wish to speak. The thing I had in my mind He has thrown from it and what I speak is under an impulse and a compulsion.

When I was arrested and hurried to the Lal Bazar hajat I was shaken in faith for a while, for I could not look into the heart of His intention. Therefore I faltered for a moment and cried out in my heart to Him, "What is this that has happened to me ? I believed that I had a mission to work for the people of my country and until that work was done, I should have Thy protection. Why

then am I here and on such a charge ?" A day passed and a second day and a third, when a voice came to me from within, "Wait and see." Then I grew calm and waited, I was taken from Lal Bazar to Alipore and was placed for one month in a solitary cell apart from men. There I waited day and night for the voice of God within me, to know what He had to say to me, to learn what I had to do. In this seclusion the earliest realisation, the first lesson came to me.

I remembered then that a month or more before my arrest, a call had come to me to put aside all activity, to go in seclusion and to look into myself, so that I might enter into closer communion with Him. I was weak and could not accept the call. My work was very dear to me and in the pride of my heart I thought that unless I was there, it would suffer or even fail and cease; therefore I would not leave it. It seemed to me that He spoke to me again and said, "The bonds you had not the strength to break, I have broken for you, because it is not my will nor was it ever my intention that that should continue. I have had another thing for you to do and it is for that I have brought you here, to teach you what you could not learn for yourself and to train you for my work."

Then He placed the Gita in my hands. His strength entered into me and I was able to do the sadhana of the Gita. I was not only to understand intellectually but to realise what Sri Krishna demanded of Arjuna and what He demands of those who aspire to do His work, to be free from repulsion and desire, to do work for Him without the demand for fruit, to renounce self-will and become a passive and faithful instrument in His hands, to have an equal heart for high and low, friend and opponent, success and failure, yet not to do His work negligently.

I realised what the Hindu religion meant. We speak often of the Hindu religion, of the Sanatan Dharma, but few of us really know what that religion is. Other religions are preponderatingly religions of faith and profession, but the Sanatan Dharma is life itself; it is a thing that has not so much to be believed as lived.

This is the Dharma that for the salvation of humanity was cherished in the seclusion of this peninsula from of old. It is to give this religion that India is rising. She does not rise as other

countries do, for self or when she is strong, to trample on the weak. She is rising to shed the eternal light entrusted to her over the world. India has always existed for humanity and not for herself and it is for humanity and not for herself that she must be great.

Therefore this was the next thing He pointed out to me. He made me realise the central truth of the Hindu religion. He turned the hearts of my jailors to me and they spoke to the Englishman in charge of the jail, "He is suffering in his confinement; let him at least walk outside his cell for half an hour in the morning and in the evening." So it was arranged, and it was while I was walking that His strength again entered into me. I looked the jail that secluded me from men and it was no longer by its high walls that I was imprisoned; no, it was Vasudeva who surrounded me.

I walked under the branches of the tree in front of my cell but it was not the tree, I knew it was Vasudeva, it was Sri Krishna whom I saw standing there and holding over me his shade. I looked at the bars of my cell, the very grating that did duty for a door and again I saw Vasudeva. It was Narayana who was guarding and standing sentry over me. Or I lay on the coarse blankets that were given me for a couch and felt the arms of Sri Krishna around me, the arms of my Friend and Lover. This was the first use of the deeper vision He gave me.

I looked at the prisoners in the jail, the thieves, the murderers, the swindlers, and as I looked at them I saw Vasudeva, it was Narayana whom I found in these darkened souls and misused bodies. Amongst these thieves and dacoits there were many who put me to shame by their sympathy, their kindness, the humanity triumphant over such adverse circumstances.

One I saw among them especially, who seemed to me a saint, a peasant of my nation who did not know how to read and write, an alleged dacoit sentenced to ten years' rigorous imprisonment, one of those whom we look down upon in our Pharisaical pride of class as Chhotalok. Once more He spoke to me and said, "Behold the people among whom I have sent you to do a little of my work. This is the nature of the nation I am raising up and the reason why I raise them."

When the case opened in the lower court and we were brought before the Magistrate I was followed by the same insight. He said to me, "When you were cast into jail, did not your heart fail and did you not cry out to me, where is Thy protection ? Look now at the Magistrate, look now at the Prosecuting Counsel."

I looked and it was not the Magistrate whom I saw, it was Vasudeva, it was Narayana who was sitting there on the bench. I looked at the Prosecuting Counsel and it was not the Counsel for the prosecution that I saw; it was Sri Krishna who sat there, it was my Lover and Friend who sat there and smiled. "Now do you fear ?" He said, "I am in all men and I overrule their actions and their words. My protection is still with you and you shall not fear. This case which is brought against you, leave it in my hand. It is not for you. It was not for the trial that I brought you here but for something else. The case itself is only a means for my work and nothing more."

Afterwards when the trial opened in the Sessions Court, I began to write many instructions for my Counsel as to what was false in the evidence against me and on what points the witnesses might be cross-examined. Then something happened which I had not expected.

The arrangements which had been made for my defence were suddenly changed and another Counsel stood there to defend me. He came unexpectedly, a friend of mine, but I did not know he was coming. You have all heard the name of the man who put away from him all other thoughts and abandoned all his practice, who sat up half the night day after day for months and broke his health to save me, Srijut Chittaranjan Das.

When I saw him, I was satisfied, but I still thought it necessary to write instructions. Then all that was put away from me and I had the message from within, "This is the man who will save you from the snares put around your feet. Put aside those papers. It is not you who will instruct him. I will instruct him."

From that time I did not of myself speak a word to my Counsel about the case or give a single instruction, and if ever I was asked a question, I always found that my answer did not help the case. I had left it to him and he took it entirely into his hands, with what

result you know. I knew all along what He meant for me, for I heard it again and again, always I listened to the voice within; "I am guiding, therefore fear not. Turn to your own work for which I have brought you to jail and when you come out, remember never to fear, never to hesitate. Remember that it is I who am doing this, not you nor any other.

Therefore whatever clouds may come, whatever dangers and sufferings, whatever difficulties, whatever impossibilities, there is nothing impossible, nothing difficult. I am in the nation and its uprising and I am Vasudeva, I am Narayana, and what I will, shall be, not what others will. What I choose to bring about, no human power can stay."

Meanwhile He had brought me out of solitude and placed me among those who had been accused along with me. You have spoken much today of my self-sacrifice and devotion to my country. I have heard that kind of speech ever since I came out of jail, but I hear it with embarrassment, with something of pain.

For I know my weakness, I am a prey to my own faults and backslidings. I was not blind to them before and when they all rose up against me in seclusion, I felt them utterly. I knew them that I the man was a man of weakness, a faulty and imperfect instrument, strong only when a higher strength entered into me. Then I found myself among these young men and in many of them I discovered a mighty courage, a power of self-effacement in comparison with which I was simply nothing. I saw one or two who were not only superior to me in force and character, - very many were that, - but in the promise of that intellectual ability on which I prided myself. He said to me, "This is the young generation, the new and mighty nation that is arising at my command. They are greater than yourself. What have you to fear ? If you stood aside or slept, the work would still be done. If you were cast aside tomorrow, here are the young men who will take up your work and do it more mightily than you have ever done. You have only got some strength from me to speak a word to this nation which will help to raise it." This was the next thing He told me.

Then a thing happened suddenly and in a moment I was hurried away to the seclusion of a solitary cell. What happened

to me during that period I am not impelled to say, but only that day after day, He showed me His wonders and made me realise the utter truth of the Hindu religion. I had many doubts before. I was brought up in England amongst foreign ideas and an atmosphere entirely foreign.

About many things in Hinduism I had once been inclined to believe that they were imaginations, that there was much of dream in it, much that was delusion and Maya. But now day after day I realised in the mind, I realised in the heart, I realised in the body the truths of the Hindu religion. They became living experiences to me, and things were opened to me which no material science could explain. When I first approached Him, it was not entirely in the spirit of the Jnani. I came to Him long ago in Baroda some years before the Swadeshi began and I was drawn into the public field.

When I approached God at that time, I hardly had a living faith in Him. The agnostic was in me, the atheist was in me, the sceptic was in me and I was not absolutely sure that there was a God at all. I did not feel His presence. Yet something drew me to the truth of the Vedas, the truth of the Gita, the truth of the Hindu religion. I felt there must be a mighty truth somewhere in this Yoga, a mighty truth in this religion based on the Vedanta.

So when I turned to the Yoga and resolved to practise it and find out if my idea was right, I did it in this spirit and with this prayer to Him, "If Thou art, then Thou knowest my heart. Thou knowest that I do not ask for Mukti, I do not ask for anything which others ask for. I ask only for strength to uplift this nation, I ask only to be allowed to live and work for this people whom I love and to whom I pray that I may devote my life."

I strove long for the realisation of Yoga and at last to some extent I had it, but in what I most desired I was not satisfied. Then in the seclusion of the jail, of the solitary cell I asked for it again. I said, "Give me Thy Adesh. I do not know what work to do or how to do it. Give me a message." In the communion of Yoga two messages came.

The first message said, "I have given you a work and it is to help to uplift this nation. Before long the time will come when

you will have to go out of jail; for it is not my will that this time either you should be convicted or that you should pass the time, as others have to do, in suffering for their country. I have called you to work, and that is the Adesh for which you have asked. I give you the Adesh to go forth and do my work."

The second message came and it said, "Something has been shown to you in this year of seclusion, something about which you had your doubts and it is the truth of the Hindu religion. It is this religion that I am raising up before the world, it is this that I have perfected and developed through the Rishis, saints and Avatars, and now it is going forth to do my work among the nations. I am raising up this nation to send forth my word. This is the Sanatan Dharma, this is the eternal religion which you did not really know before, but which I have now revealed to you.

The agnostic and the sceptic in you have been answered, for I have given you proofs within and without you, physical and subjective, which have satisfied you. When you go forth, speak to your nation always this word, that it is for the Sanatan Dharma that they arise, it is for the world and not for themselves that they arise. I am giving them freedom for the service of the world. When therefore it is said that India shall rise, it is the Sanatan Dharma that shall be great.

When it is said that India shall expand and extend herself, it is the Sanatan Dharma that shall expand and extend itself over the world. It is for the Dharma and by the Dharma that India exists. To magnify the religion means to magnify the country. I have shown you that I am everywhere and in all men and in all things, that I am in this movement and I am not only working in those who are striving for the country but I am working also in those who oppose them and stand in their path. I am working in everybody and whatever men may think or do, they can do nothing but help in my purpose.

They also are doing my work, they are not my enemies but my instruments. In all your actions you are moving forward without knowing which way you move. You mean to do one thing and you do another. You aim at a result and your efforts subserve one that is different or contrary. It is Shakti that has gone forth and entered into the people. Since long ago I have been preparing this uprising and now the time has come and it is I who will lead it to its fulfilment."

This then is what I have to say to you. The name of your society is "Society for the Protection of Religion". Well, the protection of the religion, the protection and upraising before the world of the Hindu religion, that is the work before us. But what is the Hindu religion ? What is this religion which we call Sanatan, eternal ? It is the Hindu religion only because the Hindu nation has kept it, because in this Peninsula it grew up in the seclusion of the sea and the Himalayas, because in this sacred and ancient land it was given as a charge to the Aryan race to preserve through the ages.

But it is not circumscribed by the confines of a single country, it does not belong peculiarly and for ever to a bounded part of the world. That which we call the Hindu religion is really the eternal religion, because it is the universal religion which embraces all others. If a religion is not universal, it cannot be eternal. A narrow religion, a sectarian religion, an exclusive religion can live only for a limited time and a limited purpose. This is the one religion that can triumph over materialism by including and anticipating the discoveries of science and the speculations of philosophy.

It is the one religion which impresses on mankind the closeness of God to us and embraces in its compass all the possible means by which man can approach God. It is the one religion which insists every moment on the truth which all religions acknowledge that He is in all men and all things and that in Him we move and have our being. It is the one religion which enables us not only to understand and believe this truth but to realise it with every part of our being. It is the one religion which shows the world what the world is, that it is the Lila of Vasudeva. It is the one religion which shows us how we can best play our part in that Lila, its subtlest laws and its noblest rules. It is the one religion which does not separate life in any smallest detail from religion, which knows what immortality is and has utterly removed from us the reality of death.

This is the word that has been put into my mouth to speak to you today. What I intended to speak has been put away from

me, and beyond what is given to me I have nothing to say. It is only the word that is put into me that I can speak to you. That word is now finished. I spoke once before with this force in me and I said then that this movement is not a political movement and that nationalism is not politics but a religion, a creed, a faith. I say it again today, but I put it in another way. I say no longer that nationalism is a creed, a religion, a faith; I say that it is the Sanatan Dharma which for us is nationalism. This Hindu nation was born with the Sanatan Dharma, with it it moves and with it it grows. When the Sanatan Dharma declines, then the nation declines, and if the Sanatan Dharma were capable of perishing, with the Sanatan Dharma it would perish.

The Sanatan Dharma, that is nationalism. This is the message that I have to speak to you.

SRI AUROBINDO - OPEN LETTER TO MY COUNTRYMEN

The position of a public man who does his duty in India today is too precarious to permit of his being sure of the morrow. I have recently come out of a year's seclusion from work for my country on a charge which there was not a scrap of reliable evidence to support, but my acquittal is no security either against the trumping up of a fresh accusation or the arbitrary law of deportation which dispenses with the inconvenient formality of a charge and the still more inconvenient necessity of producing evidence.

Especially with the hounds of the Anglo-Indian Press barking at our heels and continually clamouring for Government to remove every man who dares to raise his voice to speak of patriotism and its duties, the liberty of the person is held on a tenure which is worse than precarious. Rumour is strong that a case for my deportation has been submitted to the Government by the Calcutta Police and neither the tranquillity of the country nor the scrupulous legality of our procedure is a guarantee against the contingency of the all-powerful fiat of the Government watch-dogs silencing scruples on the part of those who advise at Simla.

Under such circumstances I have thought it well to address this letter to my countrymen, and especially to those who profess the principles of the Nationalist party, on the needs of the present and the policy of the future. In case of my deportation it may help to guide some who would be uncertain of their course of action, and, if I do not return from it, it may stand as my last political will and testament to my countrymen.

The situation of the Nationalist party is difficult but not impossible. The idea of some that the party is extinct because its leaders are sentenced or deported, is an error which comes of looking only at the surface. The party is there, not less powerful and pervading than before, but in want of a policy and a leader. The first it may find, the second only God can give it. All great movements wait for their God-sent leader, the willing channel of his force, and only when he comes, move forward triumphantly to their fulfilment. The men who have led hitherto have been strong men of high gifts and commanding genius, great enough to be the protagonists of any other movements, but even they were not sufficient to fulfil one which is the chief current of a world-wide revolution. Therefore the Nationalist party, the custodians of the future, must wait for the man who is to come, calm in the midst of calamity, hopeful under the defeat, sure of eventual emergence and triumph and always mindful of the responsibility which they owe not only to their Indian posterity but to the world.

Meanwhile the difficulties of our situation ask for bold yet wary walking. The strength of our position is moral, not material. The whole of the physical strength in the country belongs to the established authority which our success would, so far as its present form is concerned, abolish by transforming it out of all possibility of recognition. It is natural that it should use all its physical strength, so long as it can, that transformation. The whole of the moral strength of the country is with us, justice is with us, Nature is with us. The law of God which is higher than any human, justify our action; youth is for us, the future is ours. On that moral strength we must rely for our survival and eventual success. We must not be tempted by any rash impatience into abandoning the ground on which we are strong and venturing on the ground on which we are weak.

Our ideal is an ideal which no law can condemn: our chosen methods are such that no modern Government can expressly declare them illegal without forfeiting its claim to be considered

a civilised administration. To that ideal and to those methods we must firmly adhere and rely on them alone for our eventual success. A respect for the law is a necessary quality for endurance as a nation and it has always been a marked characteristic of the Indian people.

We must therefore scrupulously observe the law while taking every advantage both of the protection it gives and the latitude it still leaves for pushing forward our cause and our propaganda. With the stray assassinations which have troubled the country we have no concern, and, having once clearly and firmly dissociated ourselves from them, we need notice them no farther. They are the rank and noxious fruit of a rank and noxious policy and until the authors of that policy turn from their errors, no human power can prevent the poison-tree from bearing according to its kind. We who have no voice either in determining the laws of their administration are helpless in the matter. To deportation and proclamation, the favourite instruments of men incapable of wise and strong rule, we can only oppose a steady and fearless adherence to the propagandism and practice of a lawful policy and a noble ideal.

Our ideal is that of Swaraj or absolute autonomy free from foreign control. We claim the right of every nation to live its own life by its own energies according to its own nature and ideals. We reject the claim of aliens to force upon us a civilisation inferior to our own or to keep us out of our inheritance on the untenable ground of a superior fitness. While admitting the strains and defects which long subjection has induced upon our native capacity and energy, we are conscious of that capacity and energy reviving in us. We point to the unexampled national vigour which has preserved the people of this country through centuries of calamity and defeat, to the great actions of our forefathers continued even to the other day, to the many men of intellect and character such as no other nation in a subject condition has been able to produce, and we say that a people capable of such unheard-of vitality is not one which can be put down as a nation of children and incapables.

We are in no way inferior to our forefathers. We have brains, we have courage, we have an infinite and various national

capacities. All we need is a field and an opportunity. That field and opportunity can only be provided by a national government, a free society and a great Indian culture. So long as these are not conceded to us, we can have no other use for our brains, courage and capacity than to struggle unceasingly to achieve them.

Our ideal of Swaraj involves no hatred of any other nation nor of the administration which is now established by law in this country. We find a bureaucratic administration, we wish to make it democratic; we find an alien government, we wish to make it indigenous; we find a foreign control, we wish to render it Indian. They lie who say that this aspiration necessitates hatred and violence. Our ideal of patriotism proceeds on the basis of love and brotherhood and it looks beyond the unity of the nation and envisages the ultimate unity of mankind. But it is a unity of brothers, equals and free men that we seek, not the unity of master and serf, of devourer and devoured.

We demand the realisation of our corporate existence as a distinct race and nation because that is the only way in which the ultimate brotherhood of humanity can be achieved, not by blotting out individual peoples and effacing outward distinctions, but by removing the internal obstacles to unity, the causes of hatred, malice and misunderstanding. A struggle for our rights does not involve hatred of those who mistakenly deny them. It only involves a determination to suffer and strive, to speak the truth boldly and without respect of persons, to use every lawful means of pressure and every source of moral strength in order to establish ourselves and dis-establish that which denies the law of progress.

Our methods are those of self-help and passive resistance. To unite and organise ourselves in order to show our efficiency by the way in which we can develop our industries, settle our individual disputes, keep order and peace on public occasions, attend to questions of sanitation, help the sick and suffering, relieve the famine-stricken, work out our intellectual, technical and physical education, evolve a Government of our own for our own internal affairs so far as that could be done without disobeying the law or questioning the legal authority of the bureaucratic administration, this was the policy publicly and frankly adopted by the Nationalistic party.

In Bengal we had advanced so far as to afford distinct proof of our capacity in almost all these respects and the evolution of a strong, united and well-organised Bengal had become a near and certain prospect. The internal troubles which came to a head at Surat and the repressive policy initiated immediately afterwards, culminating in the destruction of our organisations and the effective intimidation of Swadeshi workers and sympathisers by official underlings, have both been serious checks to our progress and seem for the moment to have postponed the realisation of our hopes to a distant future. The check is temporary. Courage and sane statesmanship in our leaders is all that is wanted to restore the courage and the confidence of the people and evolve new methods of organisation which will not come into conflict even with the repressive laws.

The policy of passive resistance was evolved partly as the necessary complement of self-help, partly as means of putting pressure on the Government. The essence of this policy is the refusal of co-operation so long as we are not admitted to a substantial share and an effective control in legislation, finance and administration. Just as "No representation, no taxation" was the watchword of American constitutional agitation in the eighteen century, so "No control, no co-operation" should be the watchword of our lawful agitation - for constitution we have none - in the twentieth.

We sum up this refusal of co-operation in the convenient word "Boycott", refusal of co-operation in the industrial exploitation of our country, in education, in government, in judicial administration, in the details of official intercourse. Necessarily, we have not made that refusal of co-operation complete and uncompromising, but we hold it as a method to be enlarged and pushed farther according as the necessity for moral pressure becomes greater and more urgent. This is one aspect of the policy. Another is the necessity of boycott to help our own nascent energies in the field of self-help. Boycott of foreign goods is a necessary condition for the encouragement of Swadeshi industries, boycott of Government schools is a necessary condition for the growth of national education, boycott of British courts is a necessary condition for the spread of arbitration. The only question is the extent and

conditions of the boycott and that must be determined by the circumstances of the particular problem in each case. The general spirit of passive resistance has first to be raised, afterwards it can be organised, regulated and, where necessary, limited.

The first obstacle to our evolution is the internal dispute which has for the moment wrecked the Congress and left in its place the hollow and mutilated simulacrum of a National Assembly which met last year at Madras and, deprived though it is of the support of the most eminent local leaders, purposes to meet again at Lahore. It is a grievous error to suppose that this dispute hung only on personal questions and differences of a trifling importance.

As happens inevitably in such popular contests, personal questions and differences of minor importance intervened to perplex and embitter the strife, but the real questions in debate were those which involved the whole future development of the spirit and form of self-government in this country. Were that constitutional in procedure or governed by arbitrary and individual choice and discretion? Was the movement to be progressive and national or conservative and parochial in its aims, policy and spirit? These were the real issues.

The Nationalist Moderate party, governed by an exaggerated respect for old and esteemed leaders, helped, without clearly understanding what they did, those who stood for oligarchy, arbitrary procedure and an almost reactionary conservatism. Personal idiosyncracies, preferences, aversions settled like a thick cloud over the contest, the combatants on both sides flung themselves on every point of difference material or immaterial as a pretext or a weapon, the tactics of party warfare were freely used and, finally, the deliberate obstinacy of a few Moderate leaders in avoiding discussion of the points of difference and the unruly ardour of the younger men on both sides led to the violent scenes at Surat and the break-up of the Congress. If the question is ever to be settled to the advantage of national progress, the personal and minor differences must be banished from the field and the real issues plainly and dispassionately considered.

The questions of particular importance which divide the parties are the exact form of Swaraj to be held forward as an ideal, the policy of passive resistance and the form of certain resolutions.

The last is a question to be decided by the Congress itself and all that the Nationalists demand is that discussion shall not be burked and that they shall not be debarred from their constitutional right of placing their views before the National Assembly. On the other points, they cannot sacrifice their ideal or their policy, but their contention is that these differences ought not in a free deliberative assembly to stand in the way of united progress. The Swaraj matter can easily be settled by the substitution of "full and complete self-government" for "self-government on Colonial lines" in the Swaraj resolution.

The difference as to passive resistance hinges at present on the boycott resolution which the Nationalist party, - cannot consent to sacrifice. But here also they are willing to submit the question to the arbitration of freely-elected Congress, though they refuse to recognise a close and limited Subjects Committee as the final authority. It will be seen therefore that the real question throughout is constitutional. The body which at present calls itself the Congress, has adopted a constitution which is close, exclusive, undemocratic and so framed as to limit the free election of delegates by the people. It limits itself by proposing a number of articles of faith in a particular form of words to every intending delegate before he can take his seat; it aims at the election of delegates only by select bodies and associations instead of the direct election of the people; it excuses many from the chances of election and gives them an undue weight in the disposal of the affairs of the assembly.

These and similar provisions no democratic party can accept. A Nationalist Conference or a Moderate Convention may so guard its integrity, but the Congress is and must be a National Assembly admitting freely all who are duly elected by the people. The proposed passing of this reactionary constitution by a body already limited under its provisions will not cure the constitutional defect. It is only a Congress elected on the old lines that can determine the future provisions for its constitution and procedure with any hope of universal acceptance.

It is not therefore by any manipulation of the Congress or Convention that a solution of the problem can be brought about, but by the Provincial Conference empowering the leaders of both the parties to meet in Committee and provide for an arrangement

which will heal differences and enable the Congress to work smoothly and freely in the future. If there is a minority who refuse to associate themselves with any such attempt, the majority will be justified by the mandate of the Provinces in disregarding them and meeting to carry out the popular wish. Once the lives are settled they can be submitted to the free choice of a freely-elected Congress for acceptance, rejection or modification. This will restore the Congress on sound constitutional lines in which the bitter experiences of the past may be relied on to prevent those mistakes of obstinacy and passion which prevented a solution of the problem at Surat.

Outside the Congress the chances of united working are more complete than within it. There are only two questions which are likely either to trouble harmony or hamper action. The first is the question of the acceptance or rejection of the present reforms introducing, as they do, no element of popular control nor any fresh constitutional principle of privileged representation for a single community. This involves the wider question of co-operation. It is generally supposed that the Nationalist party is committed to the persistent and uncompromising refusal of co-operation until they get the full concession of Swaraj.

Nationalist publicists have not cared to combat this error explicitly because they were more anxious to get their ideal accepted and the spirit of passive resistance and complete self-help popularised than to discuss a question which was not then a part of practical politics. But it is obvious that a party advancing such a proposition would be a party of doctrinaires and idealists, not of practical thinkers and workers.

The Nationalist principle is the principle of "No control, no co-operation". Since all control has been refused, and so long as all control is refused, the Nationalist party preaches the refusal of co-operation as complete as we can make it. But it is evident that if, for instance, the power of imposing protective duties were given to a popular and elective body, no serious political party would prefer persistence in commercial boycott to the use of the powers conceded. Or if education were similarly made free of official control and entrusted to a popular body, as Lord Reay once thought of entrusting it, no sensible politician would ask the

nation to boycott that education. Or if the courts were manned by Indian judges and made responsibly not to the Executive but to a Minister representing the people, arbitration would immediately take its place as a supplementary aid to the regular courts.

So also the refusal to co-operate in an administration which excludes the people from an effective voice does not involve a refusal to co-operate in an administration of which the people are an effective part. The refusal of autocratic gifts does not involve a refusal to take up popular rights inalienably secured to the people. It is on the contrary with the object of compelling the concession of the various elements of Swaraj by peaceful moral pressure and in the absence of such concessions developing our own institutions to the gradual extrusion and final supplanting of bureaucratic institutions that the policy of self-help and passive resistance was started. This acceptance of popular rights does not imply the abandonment of the ideal of complete autonomy or of the use of passive resistance in case of any future arbitrary interference with the rights of the people. It implies only the use of partial Swaraj as a step and means towards complete Swaraj. Where the Nationalists definitely and decisively part company with an influential section of the Moderates is in refusing to aspirations from their unalterable ideal or delude the people into thinking that they have secured real rights.

Another question is that of cleaving to and enforcing the Boycott. In Bengal, even if there are some who are timid or reactionary enough to shrink from the word or the thing, the general feeling in its favour is emphatic and practically unanimous. But it is time now to consider seriously the question of regulating the Boycott. Nationalists have always demurred to the proviso "as far as possible" in the Swadeshi resolution on account of the large loophole its vagueness left to the hesitating and the lukewarm, and they have preferred the form "at a sacrifice".

But it will now be well if we face the concrete problems of the Boycott. While we must keep it absolute wherever Swadeshi articles are procurable as also in respect to pure luxuries with which we can dispense, we must recognise that there are necessities of life and business for which we still to go to foreign countries.

The public ought to be guided as to the choice of the countries which we shall favour in the purchase of these articles, - necessarily they must be sympathetic to Indian aspirations, - and those we shall exclude. The failure to deal with this question is largely responsible for the laxity of our political boycott and our consequent failure to get the Partition rescinded. There are also other questions, such as the attempt of shopkeepers and merchants to pass off foreign goods wholesale as Swadeshi, which must be taken up at once if the movement is not to suffer a serious setback.

A final difficulty remains, - by what organisation are we to carry on the movement even when these questions are settled? The Nationalist programme was to build up a great deliberative and executive organisation on the basis of a reconstituted Congress, and this scheme still remains the only feasible means of organising the country. Even if a united Congress cannot be secured, the provinces ought to be the only possible way of restoring the Congress, by reconstituting it from the bottom.

Even the District organisations, however, cannot work effectively without hands, and these we had provided for in the Sabhas and Samitis of young men which sprang up on all sides and were just succeeding in forming an efficient network of organisation all over Bengal. These are now being suppressed by administrative order; it becomes a question whether we cannot replace them by a loose and elusive organisation of young men in groups ordering each its own work by common agreement and working hand in hand, but without a rigid or definite organisation. I throw out the suggestion for consideration by the leaders of thought and action in the provinces where unity seems at all feasible.

This then is the situation as it presents itself to me. The policy I suggest to the Nationalist party briefly be summed up as follows:

1. Persistence with a strict regard to law in a peaceful policy of self-help and passive resistance.
2. The regulation of our attitude towards the Government by the principle of "No control, no co-operation".
3. A rapprochement with the Moderate Party wherever possible and the reconstitution of a united Congress.

4. The regulation of the Boycott Movement so as to make both the political and the economic boycott effective.
5. The regulation of the Boycott Movement so as to make both the political and the economic boycott effective.
6. A system of co-operation which will not contravene the law and will yet enable workers to proceed with the work of self-help and national efficiency, if not quite so effectively as before, yet with energy and success

SRI AUROBINDO - THE IDEAL OF THE KARMAYOGIN

A nation is building in India today before the eyes of the world so swiftly, so palpably that all can watch the process and those who have sympathy and intuition distinguish the forces at work, the materials in use, the lines of the divine architecture. This nation is not a new race raw from the workshop of Nature or created by modern circumstances.

One of the oldest races and greatest civilisations on this earth, the most indomitable in vitality, the most fecund in greatness, the deepest in life, the most wonderful in potentiality, after taking into itself numerous sources of strength from foreign strains of blood and other types of human civilisation, is now seeking to lift itself for good into an organised national unity, always by its excess of fecundity engendering fresh diversities and divisions, it has never yet been able to overcome permanently the almost insuperable obstacles to the organisation of a continent. The time has now come when those obstacles can be overcome. The attempt which our race has been making throughout its long history, it will now make under entirely new circumstances.

A keen observer would predict its success because the only important obstacles have been or are in the process of being removed. But we go farther and believe that it is sure to succeed because the freedom, unity and greatness of India have now become necessary to the world. This is the faith in which the Karmayogin puts its had to the work and will persist in it, refusing to be discouraged by difficulties however immense and apparently insuperable. We believe that God is with us and in that faith we shall conquer. We believe that humanity needs us and it is the love and service of humanity, of our country, of our religion that

will purify our heart and inspire our action in the struggle. The task we set before ourselves is not mechanical but moral and spiritual. We aim not at the alteration of a form of government but at the building of a nation. Of that task politics is a part, but only a part. We shall devote ourselves not to politics alone, nor to social questions alone, nor to theology or philosophy or literature or science by themselves, but we include all these in one entity which we believe to b all-important, the dharma, the national religion which we also believe to be universal. There is a mighty law of life, a great principle of human evolution, a body of spiritual knowledge and experience of which India has always been destined to be guardian, exemplar and missionary. This is the sanaatana dharma, the eternal religion.

Under the stress of alien impacts she has largely lost hold not of the structure of that dharma, but of its living reality. For the religion of India is nothing if it is not lived. It has to be applied not only to life, but to the whole of life; its spirit has to enter into and mould our society, our politics, our literature, our science, our individual character, affections and aspirations. To understand the heart of this dharma, to experience it as a truth, to feel the high emotions to which it rises and to express and execute it in life is what we understand by Karmayoga. We believe that it is to make the yoga the ideal of human life that India rises today; by the yoga she will get the strength to realise her freedom, unity and greatness, by the yoga she will keep the strength to preserve it It is a spiritual revolution we foresee and the material is only its shadow and reflex.

The European sets great store by machinery. He seeks to renovate humanity by schemes of society and systems of government; he hopes to bring about the millennium by an act of Parliament. Machinery is of great importance, but only as a working means for the spirit within, the force behind. The nineteenth century in India aspired to political emancipation, social renovation, religious vision and rebirth, but it failed because it adopted Western motives and methods, ignored the spirit, history and destiny of our race and thought that by taking over European education, European machinery, European organisation and equipment we should reproduce in ourselves European prosperity,

energy and progress. We of the twentieth century reject the aims, ideals and methods of the Anglicised nineteenth precisely because we accept its experience. We refuse to make an idol of the present. we look before and after, backward to the mighty history of our race, forward to the grandiose destiny for which that history has prepared it.

We do not believe political salvation can be attained by enlargement of Councils, introduction of the elective principle, colonial self-government or any other formula of European politics. We do not deny the use of some of these things as instruments, as weapons in a political struggle, but we deny their sufficiency whether as instruments or ideals and look beyond to an end which they do not serve except in a trifling degree. They might be sufficient if it were our ultimate destiny to be an outlying province of the British Empire or a dependent adjunct of European civilisation. That is a future which we do not think it worth making any sacrifice to accomplish.

We believe on the other hand that India is destined to work out her own independent life and civilisation, to stand in the forefront of the world and solve the political, social, economical and moral problems which Europe has failed to solve, yet the pursuit of whose solution and the feverish passage in that pursuit from experiment to experiment, from failure to failure she calls her progress. Our means must be as great as our ends and the strength to discover and use the means so as to attain the end can only be found by seeking the eternal source of strength in ourselves.

We do not believe that by changing the machinery so as to make our society the ape of Europe we shall effect social renovation. Widow-remarriage, substitution of class for caste, adult marriage, inter-marriages, inter-dining and other nostrums of the social reformer are mechanical changes which, whatever their merits or demerits, cannot by themselves save the soul of the nation alive or stay the course of degradation and decline. It is the spirit alone that saves, and only by becoming great and free in heart can we become socially and politically great and free.

We do not believe that by multiplying new sects limited within the narrower and inferior ideas of religion imported from the West or by creating organisations for the perpetuation of the

mere dress and body of Hinduism we can recover our spiritual health, energy and greatness. The world moves through an indispensable interregnum of free thought and materialism to a new synthesis of religious thought and experience, a new religious world-life free from intolerance, yet full of faith and fervour, accepting all forms of religion because it has an unshakable faith in the One.

The religion which embraces Science and faith, Theism, Christianity, Mohammedanism and Buddhism and yet is none of these, is that to which the World-spirit moves.

In our own, which is the most sceptical because it has questioned and experimented the most, the most believing because it has the deepest experience and the most varied and positive spiritual knowledge, - that wider Hinduism which is not a dogma or combination of dogmas but a law of life, which is not a social framework but the spirit of a past and future social evolution, which rejects nothing but insists and testing and experiencing everything and when tested and experienced turning it to the soul's uses, in this Hinduism we find the basis of the future world-religion. This sanatana dharma has many scriptures, Veda, Vedanta, Gita, Upanishad, Darshana, Purana, Tantra, nor could it reject the Bible or the Koran; but its real, most authoritative scripture is in the heart in which the Eternal has His dwelling. It is in our inner spiritual experiences that we shall find the proof and source of the world's Scriptures, the law of knowledge, love and conduct, the basis of the inspiration of Karmayoga.

Our aim will therefore be to help in building up India for the sake of humanity - this is the spirit of Nationalism which we profess and follow. We say to humanity, `The time has come when you must take the great step and rise out of a material existence into the higher, deeper and wider life towards which humanity moves. The problems which have troubled mankind can only be solved by conquering the Kingdom within, not by harnessing the forces of Nature to the service of comfort and luxury, but by mastering the forces of the intellect and the spirit, by vindicating the freedom of man within as well as without and by conquering from within external Nature. For that work the resurgence of Asia is necessary, therefore Asia rises. For that work the freedom and

greatness of India is essential, therefore she claims her destined freedom and greatness, and it is to the interest of all humanity, not excluding England, that she should wholly establish her claim'.

We say to the nation, `It is God's will that we should be ourselves and not Europe. We have sought to regain life by following the law of another being than our own. We must return and seek the sources of life and strength within ourselves. We must know our past and recover it for the purposes of our future. Our business is to realise ourselves first and to mould everything to the law of India's eternal life and nature. It will therefore be the object of the Karmayogin to read the heart of our religion, our society, our philosophy, politics, literature, art, jurisprudence, science, thought, everything that was and is ours, so that we may be able to say to ourselves and our nation, ``This is our dharma''. We shall review European civilisation entirely from the standpoint of Indian thought and knowledge and seek to throw off from us the dominating stamp of the Occident; what we have to take from the West we shall take as Indians. And the dharma once discovered we shall strive our utmost not only to profess but to live, in our individual actions, in our social life, in our political endeavours.'

We say to the individual and especially to the young who are now arising to do India's work, God's work, `You cannot cherish these ideals, still less than can you fulfill them if you subject your minds to European ideas or look at life from the material standpoint. Materially you are nothing, spiritually you are everything. It is only the Indian who can believe everything, dare everything, sacrifice everything. First therefore become Indians. Recover the patrimony of your forefathers. Recover the Aryan thought, the Aryan discipline, the Aryan character, the Aryan life. Recover the Vedanta, the Gita, the Yoga. Recover them not only in intellect or sentiment but in your lives. Live them and you will be great and strong, mighty, invincible and fearless. Neither life nor death will have any terrors for you. Difficulty and impossibility will vanish from your vocabularies. For it is in the spirit that strength is eternal and you must win back the kingdom of yourselves, the inner Swaraj, before you can win back your outer empire. There the Mother dwells and She waits for worship that She may give strength. Believe in Her, serve Her, lose your wills

in Hers, your egoism in the greater ego of the country, your separate selfishness in the service of humanity. Recover the source of all strength in yourselves and all else will be added to you; social soundness, intellectual preeminence, political freedom, the mastery of human thought, the hegemony of the world.'

THE PLACE OF MAN IN EVOLUTION

An evolution of consciousness is the central motive of terrestrial existence.

The evolutionary working of Nature has a double process:

an evolution of forms, an evolution of the soul.

A SPIRITUAL evolution, an evolution of consciousness in Matter is a constant developing self-formation till the form can reveal the indwelling spirit, is . . . the key-note, the central significant motive of the terrestrial existence. This significance is concealed at the outset by the involution3 of the Spirit,1 the Divine Reality, in a dense material Inconscience; a veil of Inconscience, a veil of insensibility of Matter hides the universal Consciousness-Force2 which works within it, so that the Energy, which is the first form the Force of creation assumes in the physical universe, appears to be itself inconscient and yet does the works of a vast occult intelligence. The obscure mysterious creatrix ends indeed by delivering the secret consciousness out of its thick and tenebrous prison; but she delivers it slowly, little by little, in minute infinitesimal drops, in thin jets, in small vibrant concretions of energy and substance, of life, of mind, as if that were all she could get out through the crass obstacle, the dull reluctant medium of an inconscient stuff of existence. At first she houses herself in forms of Matter which appear to be altogether unconscious, then struggles towards mentality in the guise of living Matter and attains to it imperfectly in the conscious animal. This consciousness is at first rudimentary, mostly a half subconscious or just conscious instinct; it develops slowly till in more organized forms of living Matter it reaches its climax of intelligence and exceeds itself in Man, the thinking animal who develops into the reasoning mental being but carries along with him even at his highest elevation the mould of original animality, the dead weight of subconscience of body, the downward pull of gravitation towards the original

Inertia and Nescience, the control of an inconscient material Nature over his conscious evolution, its power for limitation, its law of difficult development, its immense force for retardation and frustration. This control by the original Inconscience over the consciousness emerging from it takes the general shape of a mentality struggling towards knowledge but itself, in what seems to be its fundamental nature, an Ignorance. Thus hampered and burdened, mental man has still to evolve out of himself the fully conscious being, a divine manhood or a spiritual and supramental supermanhood which shall be the next product of the evolution. That transition will mark the passage from the evolution in the Ignorance to a greater evolution in the Knowledge, founded and proceeding in the light of the Superconscient and no longer in the darkness of the Ignorance and Inconscience.

This terrestrial evolutionary working of Nature from Matter to Mind and beyond it has a double process: there is an outward visible process of physical evolution with birth as its machinery,--for each evolved form of body housing its own evolved power of consciousness is maintained and kept in continuity by heredity; there is, at the same time, an invisible process of soul evolution with rebirth into ascending grades of form and consciousness as its machinery.

The first by itself would mean only a cosmic evolution; for the individual would be a quickly perishing instrument, and the race, a more abiding collective formulation, would be the real step in the progressive manifestation of the cosmic Inhabitant, the universal Spirit:1 rebirth is an indispensable condition for any long duration and evolution of the individual being in the earth-existence. Each grade of cosmic manifestation, eacy type of form that can house the indwelling spirit, is turned by rebirth into a means for the individual soul, the psychic entity,4 to manifest more and more of its concealed consciousness; each life becomes a step in a victory over Matter by a greater progression of consciousness in it which shall make eventually Matter itself a means for the full manifestation of the Spirit.

Man occupies the crest of the evolutionary wave.

With him occurs the passage from an unconscious to a conscious evolution.

It must be observed that the appearance of human mind and body on the earth marks a crucial step, a decisive change in the course and process of the evolution; it is not merely a continuation of the old lines. Up till this advent of a developed thinking mind in Matter evolution had been effected, not by the self-aware aspiration, intention, will or seeking of the living being, but subconsciously or subliminally6 by the automatic operation of Nature. This was so because the evolution began from the Inconscience and the secret Consciousness had not emerged sufficiently from it to operate through the self-aware participating individual will of its living creature. But in man the necessary change has been made,--the being has become awake and aware of himself; there has been made manifest in Mind its will to develop, to grow in knowledge, to deepen the inner and widen the outer existence, to increase the capacities of the nature. Man has seen that there can be a higher status of consciousness than his own; the evolutionary oestrus is there in his parts of mind and life, the aspiration to exceed himself is delivered and articulate within him: he has become conscious of a soul, discovered the self and spirit. In him, then, the substitution of a conscious for a subconscious evolution has become conceivable and practicable, and it may well be concluded that the aspiration, the urge, the persistent endeavour in him is a sure sign of Nature's will for a higher way of fulfillment, the emergence of a greater status.

AT EACH STEP ONE RECIEVES AN INTIMATION

of what the following step will be.

Already, in what seems to be inconscient in Life, the signs of sensation coming towards the surface are visible; in moving and breathing life the emergence of sensitive mind is apparent and the preparation of thinking mind is not entirely hidden, while in thinking mind, when it develops, there appear at an early stage the rudimentary strivings and afterwards the more developed seekings of a spiritual consciousness. As plant life contains in itself the obscure possibility of the conscious animal, as the animal mind is astir with the movements of feeling and perception and the rudiments of conception that are the first ground for man the thinker, so man the mental being is sublimated by the endeavour

of the evolutionary Energy to develop out of him the spiritual man, the fully conconscious being, man exceeding his first material self and discoverer of his true self and highest nature.

The nature of the next step is indicated by the deep aspirations awakening in the human race. The action of the evolutionary Nature in a type of being and consciousness is first to develop the type to its utmost capacity by just such a subtilization and increasing complexity till it is ready for her bursting of the shell, the ripened decisive emergence, reversal, turning over of consciousness on itself that consitutes a new stage in the evolution. If it be supposed that her next step is the spiritual and supramental being, the stress of spirituality in the race may be taken as a sign that that is Nature's intention, the sign too of the capacity of man to operate in himself or aid her to operate the transition. If the appearance in animal being of a type similar in some respects to the ape-kind but already from the beginning endowed with the elements of humanity was the method of the human evolution, the appearance in the human being of a spiritual type resembling mental-animal humanity but already with the stamp of the spiritual aspiration on it would be the obvious method of Nature for the evolutionary production of the spiritual and supramental being.

It is pertinently suggested that if such an evolutionary culmination is intended and man is to be its medium, it will only be a few especially evolved human beings who will form the new type and move towards the new life; that once done, the rest of humanity will sink back from a spiritual aspiration no longer necessary for Nature's purpose and remain quiescent in its normal status. It can equally be reasoned that the human gradation must be preserved if there is really an ascent of the soul by reincarnation through the evolutionary degrees towards the spiritual summit; for otherwise the most necessary of all the intermediate steps will be lacking. It must be conceded at once that there is not the least probability or possibility of the whole human race rising in a block to the supramental level; what is suggested is nothing so revolutionary and astonishing, but only the capacity in the human mentality, when it has reached a certain level or a certain point of stress of the evolutionary impetus, to press towards a higher plane of consciousness and its embodiment in the being. The

being will necessarily undergo by this embodiment a change from the normal constitution of its nature, a change certainly of its mental and emotional and sensational constitution and also to a great extent of the body-consciousness and the physical conditioning of our life and energies; but the change of consciousness will be the chief factor, the initial movement, the physical modification will be a subordinate factor, a consequence. This transmutation of the consciousness will always remain possible to the human being when the flame of the soul, the pyshic kindling, becomes potent in heart and mind and the nature is ready. The spiritual aspiration is innate in man; for he is, unlike the animal, aware of imperfection and limitation and feels that there is something to be attained beyond what he now is: this urge towards self-exceeding is not likely ever to die out totally in the race. The human mental status will be always there, but it will be there not only as a degree in the scale of rebirth, but as an open step towards the spiritual and supramental status.

A change of consciousness is the major fact of the next evolutionary transformation, and the consciousness itself, by its own mutation, will impose and effect any necessary mutation of the body.

In the previous stages of the evolution Nature's first care and effort had to be directed towards a change in the physical organization, for only so could there be a change of consciousness; this was a necessity imposed by the insufficiency of the force of consciousness already in formation to effect a change in the body. But in man a reversal is possible, indeed inevitable; for it is through consciousness, through its transmutation and no longer through a new bodily organism as a first instrumentation that the evolution can and must be effected. In the inner reality of things a change of consciousness was always the major fact, the evolution has always had a spiritual significance and the physical change was only instrumental; but this relation was concealed by the first abnormal balance of the two factors, the body of the external Inconscience outweighing and obscuring in importance the spiritual element, the conscious being. But once the balance has been righted, it is no longer the change of body that must precede the change of consciousness; the consciousness itself by its mutation

will necessitate and operate whatever mutation is needed for the body. It has to be noted that the human mind has already shown a capacity to aid Nature in the evolution of new types of plant and animal; it has created new forms of its enivronment, developed by knowledge and discipline considerable changes in its own mentality. It is not an impossibility that man should aid Nature consciously also in his own spiritual and physical evolution and transformation. The urge to it is already there and partly effective, though still incompletely understood and accepted by the surface mentality; but one day it may understand, go deeper within itself and discover the means, the secret energy, the intended operation of the Consciousness-Force within which is the hidden reality of what we call Nature.

All these are conclusions that can be arrived at even from the observation of the outward phenomena of Nature's progression, her surface evolution of being and of consciousness in the physical birth of the body. But there is the other, the invisible factor; there is rebirth, the progress of the soul by ascent from grade to grade of the evolving existence, and in the grades to higher and higher types of bodily and mental instrumentation. In this progression the psychic4 entity is still veiled, even in man the conscious mental being, by its instruments, by mind and life and body; it is unable to manifest fully, held back from coming to the front where it can stand out as the master of its nature, obliged to submit to a certain determination by the instruments, to a domination of Purusha by Prakriti.8 But in man the psychic part of the personality is able to develop with a much greater rapidity than in the inferior creation, and a time can arrive when the soul entity is close to the point at which it will emerge from behind the veil into the open and become the master of its instrumentation in Nature. But this will mean that the secret indwelling spirit, the Daemon, the Godhead within is on the point of emergence; and, when it emerges, it can hardly be doubted that its demand will be, as indeed it already is in the mind itself when it undergoes the inner psychic influence, for a diviner, a more spiritual existence. In the nature of the earth life where the mind is an instrument of the Ignorance, this can only be effected by a change of consciousness, a transition from a foundation in Ignorance to a foundation in Knowledge,

from the mental to a supramental consciousness, a supramental instrumentation of Nature.

There is no reason to suppose that this transformation is impossible on earth. In fact, it would give the truest meaning to earthly existence. There is no conclusive validity in the reasoning that because this is a world of Ignorance, such a transformation can only be achieved by a passage to a heaven beyond or cannot be achieved at all and the demand of the psychic entity is itself ignorant and must be replaced by a merger of the soul in the Absolute. This conclusion could only be solely valid if Ignorance were the whole meaning, substance and power of the world-manifestation or if there were no element in World-Nature itself through which there could be an exceeding of the ignorant mentality that still burdens our present status of being. But the Ignorance is only a portion of this World-Nature; it is not the whole of it, not the original power or creator: it is in its higher origin a self-limiting Knowledge and even in its lower origin, its emergence out of the sheer material Inconscience, it is a suppressed Consciousness labouring to find, to recover itself, to manifest Knowledge, which is its true character, as the foundation of existence.

In universal Mind itself there are ranges above our mentality which are instruments of the cosmic truth-cognition, and into these the mental being can surely rise; for already it rises towards them in supernormal conditions or receives from them without yet knowing or possessing them intuitions, spiritual intimations, large influxes of illumination or spiritual capacity. All these ranges are conscious of what is beyond them, and the highest of them is directly open to the Supermind, aware of the Truth-consciousness which exceeds it. Moreover, in the evolving being itself, those greater powers of consciousness are here, supporting mind-truth, underlying its action which screens them; this Supermind and those Truth-powers uphold Nature by their secret presence: even, truth of mind is their result, a diminished operation, a representation in partial figures. It is, therefore, not only natural but seems inevitable that these higher powers of Existence should manifest here in Mind as Mind itself has manifested in Life and Matter.

Man's urge towards spirituality is an undeniable indication of the inner drive of the Spirit within towards emergence, its insistence towards the next step of its manifestation.

If a spiritual unfolding on earth is the hidden truth of our birth into Matter, if it is fundamentally an evolution of consciousness that has been taking place in Nature, then man as he is cannot be the last term of that evolution: he is too imperfect an expression of the spirit, mind itself a too limited form and instrumentation; mind is only a middle term of consciousness, the mental being can only be a transitional being. If, then, man is incapable of exceeding mentality, he must be surpassed and supermind9 and superman must manifest and take the lead of the creation. But if his mind is capable of opening to what exceeds it, then there is no reason why man himself should not arrive at supermind and supermanhood or at least lend his mentality, life and body to an evolution of that greater term of the Spirit manifesting in Nature.

THE PRESENT EVOLUTIONARY CRISIS

It is often claimed that reason is the highest faculty of man and that it has enabled him to master himself and to master Nature.

Has reason really succeeded?

. . . Apart from the stumbling action of the world, there has been a labour of the individual thinker in man and this has achieved a higher quality and risen to a loftier and clearer atmosphere above the general human thought-levels. Here there has been the work of a reason that seeks always after knowledge and strives patiently to find out truth for itself, without bias, without the interference of distorting interests, to study everything, to analyse everything, to know the principle and process of everything. Philosophy, Science, learning, the reasoned arts, all the agelong labour of the critical reason in man have been the result of this effort. In the modern era under the impulsion of Science this effort assumed enormous proportions and claimed for a time to examine successfully and lay down finally the true principle and the sufficient rule of process not only for all the activities of Nature, but for all the activities of man. It has done great things, but it has not been in the end a success. The human

mind is beginning to perceive that it has left the heart of almost every problem untouched and illumined only outsides and a certain range of processes. There has been a great and ordered classification and mechanization, a great discovery and practical result of increasing knowledge, but only on the physical surface of things. Vast abysses of Truth lie below in which are concealed the real springs, the mysterious powers and secretly decisive influences of existence. It is a question whether the intellectual reason will ever be able to give us an adequate account of these deeper and greater things or subject them to the intelligent will as it has succeeded in explaining and canalizing, through still imperfectly, yet with much show of triumphant result, the forces of physical Nature. But these other powers are much larger, subtler, deeper down, more hidden, elusive and variable than those of physical Nature.

The whole difficulty of the reason in trying to govern our existence is that because of its own inherent limitations it is unable to deal with life in its complexity, or in its integral movements; it is compelled to break it up into parts, to make more or less artificial classifications, to build systems with limited data which are contradicted, upset or have to be continually modified by other data, to work out a selection of regulated potentialities which is broken down by the bursting of a new wave of yet unregulated potentialities.

When reason applies itself to life and action it becomes partial and passionate and the servant of other forces than the pure truth.

But even if the intellect keeps itself as impartial and disinterested as possible,--and altogther impartial, altogether disinterested the human intellect cannot be unless it is content to arrive at an entire divorce from practice or a sort of large but ineffective tolerantism, eclecticism or sceptical curiosity,--still the truths it discovers or the ideas it promulgates become, the moment they are applied to life, the plaything of forces over which the reason has little control. Science pursuing its cold and even way has made discoveries which have served on one side a practical humanitarianism, on the other supplied monstrous weapons to egoism and mutual destruction; it has made possible a gigantic efficiency of organization which has been used on one side for the

economic and social amelioration of the nations and on the other for turning each into a colossal battering-ram of aggression, ruin and slaughter. It has given rise on the one side to a large rationalistic and altruistic humanitarianism, on the other it has justified a godless egoism, vitalism, vulgar will to power and success. It has drawn mankind together and given it a new hope and at the same time crushed it with the burden of a monstrous commercialism. Nor is this due, as is so often asserted, to its divorce from religion or to any lack of idealism. Idealistic philosophy has been equally at the service of the powers of good and evil and provided an intellectual conviction both for reaction and for progress. Organized religion itself has often enough in the past hounded men to crime and massacre and justified obscurantism and oppression.

The truth is that upon which we are now insisting, that reason is in its nature an imperfect light with a large but still restricted mission and that once it applies itself to life and action it becomes subject to what it studies and the servant and counsellor of the forces in whose obscure and ill-understood struggle it intervenes. It can in its nature be used and has always been used to justify any idea, theory of life, system of society or government, ideal of individual or collective action to which the will of man attaches itself for the moment or through the centuries. In philosophy it gives equally good reasons for monism and pluralism or for any halting-place between them, for the belief in Being or for the belief in Becoming, for optimism and pessimism, for activism and quietism. It can justify the most mystic religionism and the most positive atheism, get rid of God or see nothing else. In aesthetics it supplies the basis equally for classicism and romanticism, for an idealistic, religious or mystic theory of art or for the most earthy realism. It can with equal power base austerely a strict and narrow moralism or prove triumphantly the thesis of the antinomian. It has been the sufficient and convincing prophet of every kind of autocracy or oligarchy and of every species of democracy; it supplies excellent and satisfying reasons for competitive individualism and equally excellent and satisfying reasons for communism or against communism and for State socialism or for one variety of socialism against another. It can place itself with equal effectivity at the service of utilitarianism,

economism, hedonism, aestheticism, sensualism, ethicism, idealism, or any other essential need or activity of man and build around it a philosophy, a political and social system, a theory of conduct and life. Ask it not to lean to one idea alone, but to make an eclectic combination or a synthetic harmony and it will satisfy you; only, there being any number of possible combinations or harmonies, it will equally well justify the one or the other and set up or throw down any one of them according as the spirit in man is attracted to or withdraws from it. For it is really that which decides and the reason is only a brilliant servant and minister of this veiled and secret sovereign.

Why does man have faith in reason?

Because reason has a legitimate function to fulfil, for which it is perfectly adpated; and this is to justify and illumine for man his various experiences and to give him faith and conviction in holding on to the enlarging of his consciousness.

This truth is hidden from the rationalist because he is supported by two constant articles of faith, first that his own reason is right and the reason of others who differ from him is wrong, andsecondly that whatever may be the present deficiencies of the human intellect, the collective human reason will eventually arrive at purity and be able to found human thoughts and life securely on a clear rational basis entirely satisfying to the intelligence. His first article of faith is no doubt the common expression of our egoism and arrogant fallibility, but it is something more; it expresses this truth that it is the legitimate function of the reason to justify to man his action and his hope and the faith that is in him and to give him that idea and knowledge, however restricted, and that dynamic conviction, however narrow and intolerant, which he needs in order that he may live, act and grow in the highest light available to him. The reason cannot grasp all truth in its embrace because truth is too infinite for it; but still it does grasp the something of it which we immediately need, and its insufficiency does not detract from the value of its work, but is rather the measure of its value. For man is not intended to grasp the whole truth of his being at once, but to move towards it through a succession of experiences and a constant, though not by any means perfectly continuous self-enlargement. The first business of reason

then is to justify and enlighten to him his various experiences and to give him faith and conviction in holding on to his self-enlargings. It justifies to him now this, now that, the experiences of the moment, the receding light of the past, the half-seen vision of the future. Its inconstancy, its divisibility against itself, its power of sustaining opposite views are the wohle secret of its value. It would not do indeed for it to support too conflicting views in the same individual, except at moments of awakening and transition, but in the collective body of men and in the successions of Time that is its whole business. For so man moves towards the infinity of Truth by the experience of its variety; so his reason helps him to build, change, destroy what he has built and prepare a new construction, in a word, to progress, grow, enlarge himself in his self-knowledge and world-knowledge and their works.

But reason cannot arrive at any final truth because it can neither get to the root of things nor embrace their totality.

It deals with the finite, the separate and has no measure for the all and the infinite.

The second article of faith of the believer in reason is also an error and yet contains a truth. The reason cannot arrive at any final truth because it can neither get to the root of things nor embrace the totality of their secrets; it deals with the finite, the separate, the limited aggregate, and has no measure for the all and the infinite. Nor can reason found a perfect life for man or a perfect society. A purely rational human life would be a life baulked and deprived of its most powerful dynamic sources; it would be a substitution of the minister for the sovereign. A purely rational society could not come into being and, if it could be born, either could not live or would sterilize and petrify human existence. The root powers of human life, it intimate causes are below, irrational, and they are above, suprarational. But this is true that by constant enlargement, purification, openness the reason of man is bound to arrive at an intelligent sense even of that which is hidden from it, a power of passive yet sympathetic reflection of the Light that surpasses it. Its limit is reached, its function is finished when it can say to man, 'There is a Soul, a Self, a God in the world and in man who works concealed and all is his self-concealing and gradual self-unfolding. His minister I have been, slowly to unseal your eyes, remove the thick integuments of your vision until there is only my own luminous veil between you and him. Remove that and make the soul of man one in fact and nature with this Divine; then you will know yourself, discover the highest and widest law of your being, become the possessorsor at least the receivers and instruments of a higher will and knowledge than mine and lay hold at last on the true secret and the whole sense of a human and yet divine living.'

The limitations of reason become very strikingly apparent when it is confronted with the religious life. Here is a realm at which the intellectual reason gazes with the bewildered mind of a foreigner who hears a language of which the words and the spirit are unintelligible to him and sees everywhere forms of life and principles of thought and action which are absolutely stange to his experience.

The unaided intellectual reason faced with the phenomena of the religious life is naturally apt to adopt one of two attitudes, both of them shallow in the extreme, hastily presumptuous and erroneous. Either it views the whole thing as a mass of superstition, a mystical nonsense, a farrago of ignorant barbaric survivals, - that was the extreme spirit of the rationalist now happily, though not dead, yet much weakened and almost moribund, - or it patronizes religion, tries to explain its origins, to get rid of it by the process of explaining it away; or it labours gently or forcefully to reject or correct its superstitions, crudities, absurdities, to purify it into an abstract nothingness or persuade it to purify itself in the light of the reasoning intelligence; or it allows it a role, leaves it perhaps for the edification of the ignorant, admits its value as a moralizing influence or its utility to the State for keeping the lower classes in order, even perhaps tries to invent that strange chimera, a rational religion.

What is religion really and essentially and why is it outside the realm of reason?

The deepest heart, the inmost essence of religion, apart from its outward machinery of creed, cult, ceremony and symbol, is the search for God and the finding of God. Its aspiration is to discover the Infinite, the Absolute, the One, the Divine, who is all these things and yet no abstraction but a Being. Its work is a sincere

living out of the true and intimate relations between man and God, relations of unity, relations of difference, relations of an illuminated knowledge, an ecstatic love and delight, an absolute surrender and service, a casting of every part of our existence out of its normal status into an uprush of man towards the Divine and a descent of the Divine into man. All this has nothing to do with the realm of reason or its normal activities; its aim, its sphere, its process is suprarational. The knowledge of God is not to be gained by weighing the feeble arguments of reason for or against his existence: it is to be gained only by a self-transcending and absolute consecration, aspiration and experience. Nor does that experience proceed by anything like rational scientific experiment or rational philosophic thinking. Even in those parts of religious discipline which seem most to resemble scientific experiment, the method is a verification of things which exceed the reason and its timid scope. Even in those parts of religious knowledge which seem most to resemble intellectual operations, the illuminating faculties are not imagination, logic and rational judgement, but revelations, inspirations, intuitions, intuitive discernments that leap down to us from a plane of suprarational light. The love of God is an infinite and absolute feeling which does not use a language of rational worship and adoration; the delight in God is that peace and bliss which passes all understanding. The surrender to God is the surrender of the whole being to a suprarational light, will, power and love and his service takes no account of the compromises with life which the practical reason of man uses as the best part of its method in the ordinary conduct of mundane existence. Wherever religion really finds itself, wherever it opens itself to its own spirit,--there is plenty of that sort of religious practice which is halting, imperfect, half-sincere, only half-sure of itself and in which reason can get in a word,--its way is absolute and its fruits are ineffable.

Can religion then be the guide of human life?

It is a fact that in ancient times society gave a pre-eminent place to religion.

Since the infinite, the absolute and transcendent, the universal, the One is the secret summit of existence and to reach the spiritual consciousness and the Divine the ultimate goal and aim of our

being and therefore of the whole development of the individual and the collectivity in all its parts and all its activities, reason cannot be the last and highest guide . . . For reason stops short of the Divine and only compromises with the problems of life ...

Where then are we to find the directing light and the regulating and harmonizing principle?

The first answer which will suggest itself, the answer constantly given by the Asiatic mind, is that we shall find it directly and immediately in religion.

A certain pre-eminence of religion, the overshadowing or at least the colouring of life, an overtopping of all the other instincts and fundamental ideas by the religious instinct and the religious ideas is, we may note, not peculiar to Asiatic civilizations, but has always been more or less the normal state of the human mind and of human societies . . . We must suppose then that in this leading, this predominant part assigned to religion by the normal human collectivity there is some great need and truth of our natural being to which we must always after however long an infidelity return.

But, on the other hand, humanity - and in particular that portion of humanity which was the standard-bearer of progress - has revolted against the predominance of religion.

On the other hand, we must recognize the fact that in a time of great activity, of high aspiration, of deep sowing, of rich fruit-bearing, such as the modern age with all its faults and errors has been, a time especially when humanity got rid of much that was cruel, evil, ignorant, dark, odious, not by the power of religion, but by the power of the awakened intelligence and of human idealism and sympathy, this predominance of religion has been violently attacked and rejected by that portion of humanity which was for that time the standard-bearer of thought and progress, Europe after the Renascence, modern Europe.

Very often the accredited religions have opposed progress and sided with the forces of obscurity and oppression. And it has needed a denial, a revolt of the oppressed human mind and heart to correct these errors and set religion right. This would not have been so if religion were the true and sufficient guide of the whole of human life.

We need not follow the rationalistic or atheistic mind through all its aggressive indictment of religion. We need not for instance lay a too excessive stress on the superstitions, aberrations, violences, crimes even, which Churches and cults and creeds have favoured, admitted, sanctioned, supported or exploited for their own benefit . . . As well might one cite the crimes and errors which have been committed in the name of liberty or of order as a sufficient condemnation of the ideal of liberty or the ideal of social order. But we have to note the fact that such a thing was possible and to find its explanation . . . We must observe the root of this evil, which is not in true religion itself, but in its infrarational parts, not in spiritual faith and aspiration, but in our ignorant human confusion of religion with a particular creed, sect, cult, religious society or Church.

The whole root of the historic insufficiency of religion as a guide and control of human society lies there. Churches and creeds have, for example, stood violently in the way of philosophy and science, burned a Giordano Bruno, imprisoned a Galileo, and so generally misconducted themselves in this matter that philosophy and science had in self-defense to turn upon Religion and rend her to pieces in order to get a free field for their legitimate development; and this because men in the passion and darkness of their vital nature had chosen to think that religion was bound up with certain fixed intellectual conceptions about God and the world which could not stand scrutiny, and therefore scrutiny had to be put down by fire and sword; scientific and philosophical truth had to be denied in order that religious error might survive. We see too that a narrow religious spirit often oppresses and impoverishes the joy and beauty of life, either from an intolerant asceticism or, as the Puritans attempted it, because they could not see that religious austerity is not the whole of religion, though it may be an important side of it, is not the sole ethico-religious approach to God, since love, charity, gentleness, tolerance, kindliness are also and even more divine, and they forgot or never knew that God is love and beauty as well as purity. In politics religion has often thrown itself on the side of power and resisted the coming of larger political ideals, because it was itself, in the form of a Church, supported by power and because it confused religion with the Church, or because it stood for a false theocracy,

forgetting that true theocracy is the kingdom of God in man and not the kingdom of a Pope, a priesthood or a sacerdotal class. So too it has often supported a rigid and outworn social system, because it thought its own life bound up with social forms with which it happened to have been associated during a long portion of its own history and erroneously concluded that even a necessary change there would be a violation of religion and a danger to its existence. As if so mighty and inward a power as the religious spirit in man could be destroyed by anything so small as the change of a social form or so outward as a social readjustment! This error in its many shapes has been the great weakness of religion as practised in the past and the opportunity and justification for the revolt of the intelligence, the aesthetic sense, the social and political idealism, even the ethical spirit of the human being against what should have been its own highest tendency and law.

If religion has failed, it is because it has confused the essential with the adventitious.

True religion is spiritual religion, it is a seeking after God, the opening of the deepest life of the soul to the indwelling Godhead, the eternal Omnipresence.

Dogmas, cults, moral codes are aids and props; they may be offered to man but not imposed on him.

It is true in a sense that religion should be the dominant thing in life, its light and law, but religion as it should be and is in its inner nature, its fundamental law of being, a seeking after God, the cult of spirituality, the opening of the deepest life of the soul to the indwelling Godhead, the eternal Omnipresence. On the other hand, it is true that religion when it identifies itself only with a creed, a cult, a Church, a system of ceremonial forms, may well become a retarding force and there may therefore arise a necessity for the human spirit to reject its control over the varied activities of life. There are two aspects of religion, true religion and religionism. True religion is spiritual religion, that which seeks to live in the spirit, in what is beyond the intellect, beyond the aesthetic and ethical and practical being of man, and to inform and govern these members of our being by the higher light and law of the spirit.

Religionism, on the contrary, entrenches itself in some narrow pietistic exaltation of the lower members or lays exclusive stress on intellectual dogmas, forms and ceremonies, on some kixed and rigid moral code, on some religio-political, or religio-social system. Not that these things are altogether negligible or that they must be unworthy or unnecessary or that a spiritual religion need disdain the aid of forms, ceremonies, creeds or systems. On the contrary, they are needed by man because the lower members have to be exalted and raised before they can be fully spiritualized, before they can directly feel the spirit obey its law. An intellectual formula is often needed by the thinking temperament or other parts of the infrarational being, a set moral code by man's vital nature in their turn towards the inner life. But these things are aids and supports, not the essence; precisely because they belong to the rational and infrarational parts, they can be nothing more and, if too blindly insisted on, may even hamper the suprarational light. Such as they are, they have to be offered to man and used by him, but not to be imposed on him as his sole law by a forced and inflexible domination. In the use of them toleration and free permission of variation is the first rule which should be observed. The spiritual essence of religion is alone the one thing supremely needful, the thing to which we have always to hold and subordinate to it every other element or motive.

Moreover, religion often considers spiritual life as made up of renunciation and mortification.

Religion thus becomes a force that discourages life and it cannot, therefore, be a true law and guide for life.

But here comes in an ambiguity which brings in a deeper source of divergence. For by spirituality religion seems often to mean something remote from earthly life, different from it, hostile to it. It seems to condemn the pursuit of earthly aims as a trend opposed to the turn to a spiritual life and the hopes of man on earth as an illusion or a vanity incompatible with the hopes of man in heaven. The spirit then becomes something aloof which man can only reach by throwing away the life of his lower members. Either he must abandon this nether life after a certain point, when it has served its purpose, or must persistently discourage, mortify and kill it. If that be the true sense of religion, then obviously

religion has no positive message for human society in the proper field of social effort, hope and aspiration or for the individual in any of the lower members of his being. For each principle of our nature seeks naturally for perfection in its own sphere and, if it is to obey a higher power, it must be because that power gives it a greater perfection and a fuller satisfaction even in its own field. But if perfectibility is denied to it and therefore the aspiration to perfection taken away by the spiritual urge, then it must either lose faith in itself and the power to pursue the natural expansion of its energies and activities or it must reject the call of the spirit in order to follow its own bend and law, dharma. This quarrel between earth and heaven, between the spirit and its members becomes still more sterilizing if spirituality takes the form of a religion of sorrow and suffering and austere mortification and the gospel of the vanity of things; in its exaggeration it leads to such nightmares of the soul as that terrible gloom and hopelessness of the Middle Ages in their worst moment when the one hope of mankind seemed to be in the approaching and expected end of the world, an inevitable and desirable Pralaya. But even in less pronounced and intolerant forms of this pessimistic attitude with regard to the world, it becomes a force for the discouragement of life and cannot, therefore, be a true law and guide for life. All pessimism is to that extent a denial of the Spirit, of its fullness and power, an impatience with the ways of God in the world, an insufficient faith in the divine Wisdom and Will that created the world and for ever guide it. It admits a wrong notion about that supreme Wisdom and Power and therefore cannot itself be the supreme wisdom and power of the spirit to which the world can look for guidance and for the uplifting of its whole life towards the Divine. . . .

The world-shunning monk, the mere ascetic may indeed well find by this turn his own individual and peculiar salvation, the spiritual recompense of his renunciation and tapasya, as the materialist may find by his own exclusive method the appropriate rewards of his energy and concentrated seeking; but neither can be the true guide of mankind and its law-giver. The monastic attitude implies fear, an aversion, a distrust of life and its aspirations, and one cannot wisely guide that with which one is entirely out of sympathy, that which one wishes to minimize and

discourage. The sheer ascetic spirit, if it directed life and human society, could only prepare it to be a means for denying itself and getting away from its own motives. An ascetic guidance might tolerate the lower activities, but only with a view to persuade them in the end to minimize and finally cease from their own action.

In spirituality then, restored to its true sense, we must seek for the directing light and the harmonizing law.

But a spirituality which draws back from life to envelop it without being dominated by it does not labour under this disability. The spiritual man who can guide human life towards its perfection is typified in the ancient Indian idea of the Rishi, one who has lived fully the life of man and found the word of the supra-intelectual, supramental, spiritual truth. He has risen above these lower limitations and can view all things from above, but also he is in sympathy with their effort and can view them from within; he has the complete inner knowledge and the higher surpassing knowledge. Therefore he can guide the world humanly as God guides it divinely, because like the Divine he is in the life of the world and yet above it.

In spirituality, then, understood in this sense, we must seek for the directing light and the harmonizing law, and in religion only in proportion as it identifies itself with this spirituality. So long as it falls short of this, it is one human activity and power among others, and, even if it be considered the most important and the most powerful, it cannot wholly guide the others. If it seeks always to fix them into the limits of a creed, an unchangeable law, a particular system, it must be prepared to see them revolting from its control; for although they may accept this impress for a time and greatly profit by it in the end they must move by the law of their being towards a freer activity and an untrammelled movement. Spirituality respects the freedom of the human soul, because it is itself fulfilled by freedom; and the deepest meaning of freedom is the power to expand and grow towards perfection by the law of one's own nature, dharma.

On the other hand, modern man has not solved the problem of the relation of the individual to the society.

What are their respective roles in the spiritual progress of mankind?

In our human aspiration towards a personal perfection and the perfection of the life of the race the elements of the future evolution are foreshadowed and striven after, but in a confusion of half-enlightened knowledge; there is a discord between the necessary elements, an opposing emphasis, a profusion of rudimentary unsatisfying and ill-accorded solutions. These sway between the three principal preoccupations of our idealism,--the complete single development of the human being in himself, the perfectibility of the individual, a full development pragmatically restricted, the perfect or best possible relations of individual with individual and society and of community with community. An exclusive or dominant emphasis is laid sometimes on the individual, sometimes on the collectivity or society, sometimes on a right and balanced relation between the individual and the collective human whole.

In recent times the whole stress has passed to the life of the race, to a search for the perfect society, and latterly to a concentration on the right organization and scientific mechanization of the life of mankind as a whole; the individual now tends more to be regarded only as a member of the collectivity, a unit of the race whose existence must be subordinated to the common aims and total interest of the organized society, and much less or not at all as a mental or spiritual being with his own right and power of existence. This tendency has not yet reached its acme everywhere, but everywhere it is rapidly increasing and heading towards dominance.

Thus, in the vicissitudes of human thought, on one side the individual is moved or invited to discover and pursue his own self-affirmation, his own development of mind and life and body, his own spiritual perfection; on the other he is called on to efface and subordinate himself and to accept the ideas, ideals, will, instincts, interests of the community as his own. He is moved by Nature to live for himself and by something deep within him to affirm his individuality; he is called upon by society and by a certain mental idealism to live for humanity or for the greater good of the community.The principle of self and its interest is met

and opposed by the principle of altruism. The State erects its godhead and demands his obedience, submission, subordination, self-immolation; the individual has to affirm against this exorbitant claim the rights of his ideals, his ideas, his personality, his conscience. It is evident that all this conflict of standards is a groping of the mental Ignorance of man seeking to find its way and grasping different sides of the truth but unable by its want of integrality in knowledge to harmonize them together. A unifying and harmonizing knowledge can alone find the way, but that knowledge belongs to a deeper principle of our being to which oneness and integrality are native. It is only by finding that in ourselves that we can solve the problem of our existence and with it the problem of the true way of individual and communal living.

There is a Reality, a truth of all existence which is greater and more abiding than all its formations and manifestations; to find that truth and Reality and live in it, achieve the most perfect manifestation and formation possible of it, must be the secret of perfection whether of individual or communal being. This Reality is there within each thing and gives to each of its formations its power of being and value of being. The universe is a manifestation of the Reality, and there is a truth of the universal existence, a Power of cosmic being, an all-self or world-spirit. Humanity is a formation or manifestation of the Reality in the universe, and there is a truth and self of humanity, a human spirit, a destiny of human life. The community is a formation of the Reality, a manifestation of the spirit of man, and there is a truth, a self, a power of this collective being. The individual is a formation of the Reality, and there is a truth of the individual, an individual self, soul or spirit that expresses itself through the individual mind, life and body and can express itself too in something that goes beyond mind, life and body, something even that goes beyond humanity. For our humanity is not the whole of the Reality or its best possible self-formation or self-expression,--the Reality has assumed before man existed an infra-human formation and self-creation and can assume after him or in him a suprahuman formation and self-creation.

It is wrong to demand that the individual subordinate himself to the collectivity or merge in it, because it is by its most advanced

individuals that the collectivity progresses and they can really advance only if they are free. But it is true that as the individual advances spiritually, he finds himself more and more united with the collectivity and the All.

The individual is indeed the key of the evolutionary movement; for it is the individual who finds himself, who becomes conscious of the Reality. The movement of the collectivity is a largely subconscious mass movement; it has to formulate and express itself through the individuals to become conscious: its general mass consciousness is always less evolved than the consciousness of its most developed individuals, and it progresses in so far as it accepts their impress or develops what they develop. The individual does not owe his ultimate allegience either to the State which is a machine or to the community which is a part of life and not the whole life: his allegiance must be to the Truth, the Self, the Spirit, the Divine which is in him and in all; not to subordinate or lose himself in the mass, but to find and express that truth of being in himself and help the community and humanity in its seeking for its own truth and fullness of being must be his real object of existence. But the extent to which the power of the individual life or the spiritual Reality within it becomes operative, depends on his own development: so long as he is undeveloped, he has to subordinate in many ways his undeveloped self to whatever is greater than it. As he develops, he moves towards a spiritual freedom, but this freedom is not something entirely separate from all-existence; it has a solidarity with it because that too is the self, the same spirit. As he moves towards spiritual freedom, he moves also towards spiritual oneness. The spiritually realized, the liberated man is preoccupied, says the Gita, with the good of all beings; Buddha discovering the way of Nirvana must turn back to open that way to those who are still under the delusion of their constructive instead of their real being--or non-being; Vivekananda, drawn by the Absolute, feels also the call of the disguised Godhead in humanity and most the call of the fallen and the suffering, the call of the self to the self in the obscure body of the universe. For the awakened individual the realization of his truth of being and his inner liberation and perfection must be his primary seeking, - first,

because that is the call of the Spirit within him, but also because it is only be liberation and perfection and realization of the truth of being that man can arrive at truth of living. A perfected community also can exist only by the perfection of its individuals, and perfection can come only by the discovery and affirmation in life by each of his own spiritual being and the discovery by all of their spiritual unity and a resultant life unity.

The present evolutionary crisis comes from a disparity between the limited faculties of man - mental, ethical and spiritual - and the technical and economical means at his disposal.

At present mankind is undergoing an evolutionary crisis in which is concealed a choice of its destiny; for a stage has been reached in which the human mind has achieved in certain directions an enormous development while in others it stands arrested and bewildered and can no longer find its way. A structure of the external life has been raised up by man's ever-active mind and life-will, a structure of an unmanageable hugeness and complexity, for the service of his mental, vital, physical claims and urges, a complex political, social, administrative, economic, cultural machinery, an organized collective means for his intellectual, sensational, aesthetic and material satisfaction. Man has created a system of civilization which has become too big for his limited mental capacity and understanding and his still more limited spiritual and moral capacity to utilize and manage, a too dangerous servant of his blundering ego and its appetites. For no greater seeing mind, no intuitive soul of knowledge has yet come to his surface of consciousness which could make this basic fullness of life a condition for the free growth of something that exceeded it. This new fullness of the means of life might be, by its power for a release from the incessant unsatisfied stress of his economic and physical needs, an opportunity for the full pursuit of other and greater aims surpassing the material existence, for the discovery of a greater and diviner spirit which would intervene and use life for a higher perfection of the being: but it is being used instead for the multiplication of new wants and an aggressive expansion of the collective ego. At the same time Science has put at his disposal many potencies of the universal Force and has made the life of humanity materially one; but what uses this

universal Force is a little human individual or communal ego with nothing universal in its light of knowledge or its movements, no inner sense or power which would create in this physical drawing together of the human world a true life unity, a mental unity or a spiritual oneness. All that is there is a chaos of clashing mental ideas, urges of individual and collective physical want and need, vital claims and desires, impulses of an ignorant life-push, hungers and calls for life satisfaction of individuals, classes, nations, a rich fungus of political and social and economic nostrums and notions, a hustling medley of slogans and panaceas for which men are ready to oppress and be oppressed, to kill and be killed, to impose them somehow or other by the immense and too formidable means placed at his disposal, in the belief that this is his way out to something ideal. The evolution of human mind and life must necessarily lead towards an increasing universality; but on a basis of ego and segmenting and dividing mind this opening to the universal can only create a vast pollulation of unaccorded ideas and impulses, a surge of enormous powers and desires, a chaotic mass of unassimilated and intermixed mental, vital and physical material of a larger existence which, because it is not taken up by a creative harmonizing light of the spirit, must welter in a universalized confusion and discord out of which it is impossible to build a greater harmonic life.

Without an inner change man can no longer cope with the gigantic development of the outer life.

A life unity, mutuality and harmony born of a deeper and wider truth of our being is the only truth of life that can successfully replace the imperfect mental constructions of the past which were a combination of association and regulated conflict, an accommodation of egos and interests grouped or dovetailed into each other to form a society, a consolidation by common general life-motives, a unification by need and the pressure of struggle with outside forces. It is such a change and such a reshaping of life for which humanity is blindly beginning to seek, now more and more with a sense that its very existence depends upon finding the way. The evolution of mind working upon life has developed an organization of the activity of mind and use of matter which can no longer be supported by human capacity

without an inner change. An accomodation of the ego-centric human individuality, separative even in association, to a system of living which demands unity, perfect mutuality, harmony, is imperative. But because the burden which is being laid on mankind is too great for the present littleness of the human personality and its petty mind and small life-instincts, because it cannot operate the needed change, because it is using this new apparatus and organization to serve the old infraspiritual and infrarational life-self of humanity, the destiny of the race seems to be heading dangerously, as if impatiently and in spite of itself, under the drive of the vital ego seized by colossal forces which are on the same scale as the huge mechanical organization of life and scientific knowledge which it has evolved, a scale too large for its reason and will to handle, into a prolonged confusion and perilous crisis and darkness of violent shifting incertitude. Even if this turns out to be a passing phase or appearance and a tolerable structural accomodation is found which will enable mankind to proceed less catastrophically on its uncertain journey, this can only be a respite. For the problem is fundamental and in putting it evolutionary Nature in man is confronting herself with a critical choice which must one day be solved in the true sense if the race is to arrive or even to survive.

The exaltation of the collectivity, of the State, only substitutes the collective ego for the individual ego.

A rational and scientific formula of the vitalistic and materialistic human being and his life, a search for a perfected economic society and the democratic cultus of the average man are all that the modern mind presents us in this crisis as a light for its solution. Whatever the truth supporting these ideas, this is clearly not enough to meet the need of a humanity which is missioned to evolve beyond itself or, at any rate, if it is to live, must evolve far beyond anything that it at present is. A life-instinct in the race and in the average man himself has felt the inadequacy and has been driving towards a reversal of values or a discovery of new values and a transfer of life to a new foundation. This has taken the form of an attempt to find a simple and ready-made basis of unity, mutuality, harmony for the common life, to enforce it by a suppression of the competitive clash of egos and so to arrive at a life of identity for the community in place of a life of difference. But to realize these desirable ends the means adopted have been the forcible and successful materialization of a few restricted ideas or slogans enthroned to the exclusion of all other thought, the suppression of the mind of the individual, a mechanized compression of the elements of life, a mechanized unity and drive of the life-force, a coercion of man by the State, the substitution of the communal for the individual ego. The communal ego is idealized as the soul of the nation, the race, the community; but this is a colossal and may turn out to be a fatal error. A forced and imposed unanimity of mind, life, action raised to their highest tension under the drive of something which is thought to be greater, the collective soul, the collective life, is the formula found. But this obscure collective being is not the soul or self of the community; it is a life-force that rises from the subconscient and, if denied the light of guidance by the reason, can be driven only by dark massive forces which are powerful but dangerous for the race because they are alien to the conscious evolution of which man is the trustee and bearer. It is not in this direction that evolutionary Nature has pointed mankind; this is a reversion towards something that she had left behind her.

If humanity is to survive, a radical transformation of human nature is indispensable.

But it has not been found in experience, whatever might have once been hoped, that education and intellectual training by itself can change man; it only provides the human individual and collective ego with better information and a more efficient machinery for its self-affirmation, but leaves it the same unchanged human ego. Nor can human mind and life be cut into perfection - even into what is thought to be perfection, a constructed substitute, - by any kind of social machinery; matter can be so cut, thought can be so cut, but in our human existence matter and thought are only instruments for the soul and the life-force. Machinery cannot form the soul and life-force into standardized shapes; it can at best coerce them, make soul and mind inert and stationary and regulate the life's outward action; but if this is to be effectively done, coercion and compression of the mind and life are indispensable and that again spells either unprogressive stability or decadence.

There is the possibility that in the swing back from a mechanistic idea of life and society the human mind may seek refuge in a return to the religious idea and a society governed or sanctioned by religion. But orgnanized religion, though it can provide a means of inner uplift for the individual and preserve in it or behind it a way for his opening to spiritual experience, has not changed human life and society; it could not do so because, in governing society, it had to compromise with the lower parts of life and could not insist on the inner change of the whole being; it could insist only on a credal adherence, a formal acceptance of its ethical standards and a conformity to institution, ceremony and ritual. Religion so conceived can give a religio-ethical colour or surface tinge, - sometimes, if it maintains a strong kernel of inner experience, it can generalize to some extent an incomplete spiritual tendency; but it does not transform the race, it cannot create a new principle of the human existence. A total spiritual direction given to the whole life and the whole nature can alone lift humanity beyond itself. Another possible conception akin to the religious solution is the guidance of society by men of spiritual attainment, the brotherhood or unity of all in the faith or in the discipline, the spiritualization of life and society by the taking up of the old machinery of life into such a unification or inventing a new machinery. This too has been attempted before without success; it was the original founding idea of more than one religion: but the human ego and vital nature were too strong for a religious idea working on the mind and by the mind to overcome its resistance. It is only the full emergence of the soul,4 the full descent of the native light and power of the Spirit and the consequent replacement or transformation and uplifting of our insufficient mental and vital nature by a spiritual and supramental supernature that can effect this evolutionary miracle.

At first sight this insistence on a radical change of nature might seem to put off all the hope of humanity to a distant evolutionary future; for the transcendence of our normal human nature, a transcendence of our mental, vital and physical being, has the appearance of an endeavour too high and difficult and at present, for man as he is, impossible. Even if it were so, it would still remain the sole possibility for the transmutation of life; for to hope for a true change of human life without a change of human nature is an irrantional and unspiritual proposition; it is to ask for something unnatural and unreal, an impossible miracle. But what is demanded by this change is not something altogether distant, alien to our existence and radically impossible; for what has to be developed is there in our being and not something outside it: what evolutionary Nature presses for, is an awakening to the knowledge of self, the discovery of self, the manifestation of the self and spirit within us and the release of its self-knowledge, its self-power, its native self-instrumentation. It is, besides a step for which the whole of evolution of the being touches a point where intellect and vital force reach some acme of tension and there is a need either for them to collapse, to sink back into a torpor of defeat or a repose of unprogressive quiescence or to rend their way through the veil against which they are straining. What is necessary is that there should be a turn in humanity felt by some or many towards the vision of this change, a feeling of its imperative need, the sense of its possibility, the will to make it possible in themselves and to find the way. That trend is not absent and it must increase with the tension of the crisis in human world-destiny; the need of an escape or a solution, the feeling that there is no other solution than the spiritual cannot but grow and become more imperative under the urgency of critical circumstance. To that call in the being there must always be some answer in the Divine Reality and in Nature.

Standards of Conduct and Spiritual Freedom

Since perfection is progressive, good and evil are shifting quantities and change from time to time their meaning and value.

If we are to be free in the Spirit, if we are to be subject only to the supreme Truth, we must discard the idea that our mental or moral laws are binding on the Infinite or that there can be anything sacrosanct, absolute or eternal even in the highest of our existing standards of conduct. To form higher and higher temporary standards as long as they are needed is to serve the Divine in his world march; to erect rigidly an absolute standard is to attempt the erectoin of a barrier against the eternal waters in their outflow. Once the nature-bound soul realizes this truth, it is delivered from the duality of good and evil. For good is all that helps the individual and the world towards their divine

fullness, and evil is all that retards or breaks up that increasing perfection. But since the perfection is progressive, evolutive in Time, good and evil are also shifting quantities and change from time to time their meaning and value. This thing which is evil now and in its present shape must be abandoned was once helpful and necessary to the general and individual progress. That other thing which we now regard as evil may well become in another form and arrangement an element in some future perfection. And on the spiritual level we transcend even this distinction, for we discover the purpose and divine utility of all these things that we call good and evil. Then we have to reject the falsehood in them and all that is distorted, ignorant and obscure in that which is called good no less than in that which is called evil. For we have then to accept only the true and the divine, but to make no other distinction in the eternal processes.

To those who can act only on a rigid standard, to those who can feel only the human and not the divine values, this truth may seem to be a dangerous concession which is likely to destroy the very foundation of morality, confuse all conduct and establish only chaos. Certainly, if the choice must be between an eternal and unchanging ethics and no ethics at all, it would have that result for man in his ignorance. But even on the human level, if we have light enough and flexibility enough to recognize that a standard of conduct may be temporary and yet necessary for its time and to observe it faithfully until it can be replaced by a better, then we suffer no such loss, but lose only the fanaticism of an imperfect and intolerant virtue. In its place we gain openess and a power of continual moral progression, charity, the capacity to enter into an understanding sympathy with all this world of struggling and stumbling creatures and by that charity a better right and a greater strength to help it upon its way. In the end where the human closes and the divine commences, where the mental disappears into the supramental consciousness and the finite precipitates itself into the infinite, all evil disappears into a transcendent divine Good which becomes universal on every plane of consciousness that it touches.

This, then, stands fixed for us that all standards by which we may seek to govern our conduct are only our temporary, imperfect

and evolutive attempts to represent to ourselves our stumbling mental progress in the universal self-realization towards which Nature moves. But the divine manifestation cannot be bound by our little rules and fragile sanctities; for the consciousness behind it is too vast for these things. Once we have grasped this fact, disconcerting enough to the absolutism of our reason, we shall better be able to put in their right place in regard to each other the successive standards that govern the different stages in the growth of the individual and the collective march of mankind. At the most general of them we may cast a passing glance. For we have to see how they stand in relation to that other standardless, spiritual and supramental mode of working for which Yoga13 seeks and to which it moves by the surrender of the individual to the divine Will and, more effectively, through his ascent by this surrender to the greater consciousness in which a certain identity with the dynamic Eternal becomes possible.

Four main principles successively govern human conduct.

The first two are personal need and the good of the collectivity.

There are four main standards of human conduct that make an ascending scale.

The first is personal need, preference and desire; the second is the law and good of the collectivity; the third is an ideal ethic; the last is the highest divine law of the nature.

Man starts on the long career of his evolution with only the first two of these four to enlighten and lead him; for they constitute the law of his animal and vital existence, and it is as the vital and physical animal man that he begins his progress. The true business of man upon earth is to express in the type of humanity a growing image of the Divine; whether knowingly or unknowingly, it is to this end that Nature is working in him under the thick veil of her inner and outer processes. But the material or animal man is ignorant of the inner aim of life; he knows only its needs and its desires and he has necessarily no other guide to what is required of him than his own perception of need and his own stirrings and pointings of desire. To satisfy his physical and vital demands and necessities before all things else and, in the next rank, whatever emotional or mental cravings or imaginations or dynamic notions

rise in him must be the first natural rule of his conduct. The sole balancing or overpowering law that can modify or contradict this pressing natural claim is the demand put on him by the ideas, needs and desires of his family, community or tribe, the herd, the pack of which he is a member.

In itself this seemingly larger and overriding law is no more than an extension of the vital and animal principle that governs the individual elementary man; it is the law of the pack or herd. The individual identifies partially his life with the life of a certain number of other individuals with whom he is associated by birth, choice or circumstance. And since the existence of the group is necessary for his own existence and satisfaction, in time, if not from the first, its preservation, the fulfillment of its needs and the satisfaction of its collective notions, desires, habits of living, without which it would not hold together, must come to take a primary place.

The satisfaction of personal idea and feeling, need and desire, propensity and habit has to be constantly subordinated, by the necessity of the situation and not from any moral or altruistic motive, to the satisfaction of the ideas and feelings, needs and desires, propensities and habits, not of this or that other individual or number of individuals, but of the society as a whole. This social need is the obscure matrix of morality and of man's ethical impulse.

Man has in him two distinct master impulses, the individualistic and the communal, a personal life and a social life, a personal motive of conduct and a social motive of conduct. The possibility of their opposition and the attempt to find their equation lie at the very roots of human civilization and persist in other figures when he has passed beyond the vital animal into a highly individualized mental and spiritual progress.

The existence of a social law external to the individual is at different times a considerable advantage and a disadvantage to the development of the divine in man. It is an advantage at first when man is crude and incapable of self-control and self-finding, because it erects a power other than that of his personal egoism through which that egoism may be induced or compelled to moderate its savage demands, to discipline its irrational and often violent movements and even to lose itself sometimes in a larger

and less personal egoism. It is a disadvantage to the adult spirit ready to transcend the human formula because it is an external standard which seeks to impose itself on him from outside, and the condition of his perfection is that he shall grow from within and in an increasing freedom, not by the suppression but by the transcendence of his perfected individuality, not any longer by a law imposed on him that trains and disciplines his members but by the soul from within breaking through all previous forms to possess with its light and transmute his members.

A conflict is born of the opposition of the two instinctive tendencies which govern human action: the individualist and the gregarious.

In the conflict of the claims of society with the claims of the individual two ideal and absolute solutions confront one another. There is the demand of the group that the individual should subordinate himself more or less completely or even lose his independent existence in the community, the smaller must be immolated or self-offered to the larger unit. He must accept the need of the society as his own need, the desire of the society as his own desire; he must live not for himself but for the tribe, clan, commune or nation of which he is a member.

The ideal and absolute solution from the individual's standpoint would be a society that existed not for itself, for its all-overriding collective purpose, but for the good of the individual and his fulfilment, for the greater and more perfect life of all its members. Representing as far as possible his best self and helping him to realize it, it would respect the freedom of each of its members and maintain itself not by law and force but by the free and spontaneous consent of its constituent persons.

And in the present balance of humanity there is seldom any real danger of exaggerated individualism breaking up the social integer. There is continually a danger that the exaggerated pressure of the social mass by its heavy unenlightened mechanical weight may suppress or unduly discourage the free development of the individual spirit. For man in the individual can be more easily enlightened, conscious, open to clear influences; man in the mass is still obscure, half-conscious, ruled by universal forces that escape its mastery and its knowledge.

In order to settle this conflict, a new principle comes in, other and higher than the two conflicting instincts, and aiming both to override and to reconcile them. This third principle is the ethical ideal.

Above the natural individual law which sets up as our one standard of conduct the satisfaction of our individual needs, preferences and desires and the natural communal law which sets up as a superior standard the satisfaction of the needs, preferences and desires of the community as a whole, there had to arise the notion of an ideal moral law which is ont the satisfaction of need and desire, but controls and even coerces or annuls them in the interests of an ideal order that is not animal, not vital and physical, but mental, a creation of the mind's seeking for light and knowledge and right rule and right movement and true order. The moment this notion becomes powerful in man, he begins to escape from the engrossing vital and material into the mental life . . . It is therefore essentially an individual standard; it is not a creation of the mass mind. The thinker is the individual; it is he who calls out and throws into forms that which would otherwise remain subconscious in the amorphous human whole. The moral striver is also the individual; self-discipline, not under the yoke of an outer law, but in obedience to an internal light, is essentially an individual effort. But by positing his personal standard as the translation of an absolute moral ideal the thinker imposes it, not on himself alone, but on all the individuals whom his thought can reach and penetrate. And as the mass of individuals come more and more to accept it in idea if only in an imperfect practice or no practice, society also is compelled to obey the new orientation. It absorbs the ideative influence and tries, not with any striking success, to mould its institutions into new forms touched by these higher ideals. But always its instinct is to translate them into binding law, into pattern forms, into mechanic custom, into an external social compulsion upon its living units.

For, long after the individual has become partially free, a moral organism capable of conscious growth, aware of an inward life, eager for spiritual progress, society continues to be mechanical, more intent upon status and self-preservation than on growth and self-perfection. The greatest triumph of the thinking and progressive individual over the instinctive and static society has been the power he has acquired by his thought-will to compel it to think also, to open itself to the idea of social justice and righteousness, communal sympathy and mutual compassion, to feel after the rule of reason rather than blind custom as the test of its institutions and to look on the mental and moral assent of its individuals as at least one essential element in the validity of its laws. Ideally at least, to consider light rather than force as its sanction, moral development and not vengeance or restraint as the object even of its penal action, is becoming just possible to the communal mind. The greatest future triumph of the thinker will come when he can persuade the individual integer and the collective whole to rest their life-relation and its union and stability upon a free and harmonious consent and self-adaptation, and shape and govern the external by the internal truth rather than to constrain the inner spirit by the tyranny of the external form and structure.

But conflicts do not subside; they seem rather to multiply.

Moral laws are arbitrary and rigid; when applied to life, they are obliged to come to terms with it and end in compromises which deprive them of all power.

But even this success that he has gained is rather a thing in potentiality than in actual accomplishment. There is always a disharmony and a discord between the moral law in the individual and the law of his needs and desires, between the moral law proposed to society and the physical and vital needs, desires, customs, prejudices, interests and passions of the caste, the clan, the religious community, the society, the nation. The moralist erects in vain his absolute ethical standard and calls upon all to be faithful to it without regard to consequences.

The first reason is that our moral ideals are themselves for the most part ill-evolved, ignorant and arbitrary, mental constructions rather than transcriptions of the eternal truths of the spirit. Authoritative and dogmatic, they assert certain absolute standards in theory, but in practice every existing system of ethics proves either in application unworkable or is in fact a constant coming short of the absolute standard to which the ideal pretends. If our ethical system is a compromise or a makeshift, it gives at once a

principle of justification to the further sterilizing compromises which society and the individual hasten to make with it. And if it insists on absolute love, justice, right with an uncompromising insistence, it soars above the head of human possibility and is professed with lip homage but ignored in practice. Even it is found that it ignores other elements in humanity which equally insist on survival but refuse to come within the moral formula. For just as the individual law of desire contains within it invaluable elements of the infinite whole which have to be protected against the tyranny of the absorbing social idea, the innate impulses too both of individual and of collective man contain in them invaluable elements which escape the limits of any ethical formula yet discovered and are yet necessary to the fullness and harmony of an eventual divine perfection.

Moreover, absolute love, absolute justice, absolute right reason in their present application by a bewildered and imperfect humanity come easily to be conflicting principles. Justice often demands what love abhors. Right reason dispassionately considering the facts of nature and human relations in search of a satisfying norm or rule is unable to admit without modification either any reign of absolute justice or any reign of absolute love. And in fact man's absolute justice easily turns out to be in practice a sovereign injustice; for his mind, one-sided and rigid in its constructions, puts forward a one-sided partial and rigorous scheme or figure and claims for it totality and absoluteness and an application that ignores the subtler truth of things and the plasticity of life. All our standards turned into action either waver on a flux of compromises or err by this partiality and unelastic structure. Humanity sways from one orientation to another; the race moves upon a zigzag path led by conflicting claims and, on the whole, works out instinctively what Nature intends, but with much waste and suffering, rather than either what it desires or what it holds to be right or what the highest light from above demands from the embodied spirit.

Behind the ethical law, which is a false image, a greater truth of a vast consciousness without fetters unveils itself, the supreme law of our divine nature. It determines perfectly our relations with each being and with the totality of the universe, and it also reveals

the exact rhythm of the direct expression of the Divine in us. It is the fourth and supreme principle of action, which is at the same time imperative law and absolute freedom.

The fact is that when we have reached the cult of absolute ethical qualities and erected the categorical imperative of an ideal law, we have not come to the end of our search or touched the truth that delivers . . . And behind the inadequacy of these ethical conceptions something too is concealed that does attach to s supreme Truth; there is here the glimmer of a light and power that are part of a yet unreached divine Nature. But the mental idea of these things is not that light and the moral formulation of them is not that power. These are only representative constructions of the mind that cannot embody the divine spirit which they vainly endeavour to imprison in their categorical formulas. Beyond the mental and moral being in us is a greater divine being that is spiritual and supramental; for it is only through a large spiritual plane where the mind's formulas dissolve in a white flame of direct inner experience that we can reach beyond mind and pass from its constructions to the vastness and freedom of the supramental realities. There alone can we touch the harmony of the divine powers that are poorly mispresented to our mind or framed into a false figure by the conflicting or wavering elements of the moral law. There alone the unification of the transformed vital and physical and the illumined mental man becomes possible in that supramental spirit which is at once the secret source and goal of our mind and life and body. There alone is there any possibility of an absolute justice, love and right--far other than that which we imagine--at one with each other in the light of a supreme divine knowledge. There alone can there be a reconciliation of the conflict between our members.

In other words there is, above society's external law and man's moral law and beyond them, though feebly and ignorantly aimed at by something within them, a larger truth of a vast unbound consciousness, a law divine towards which both these blind and gross formulations are progressive faltering steps that try to escape from the natural law of the animal to a more exalted light or universal rule. That divine standard, since the godhead in us is our spirit moving towards its own concealed perfection, must be

a supreme spiritual law and truth of our nature. Again, as we are embodied beings in the world with a common existence and nature yet individual souls capable of direct touch with the Transcendent, this supreme truth of ourselves must have a double character. It must be a law and truth that discovers the perfect movement, harmony, rhythm of a great spiritualized collective life and determines perfectly our relations with each being and all beings in Nature's varied oneness. It must be at the same time a law and truth that discovers to us at each moment the rhythm and exact steps of the direct expression of the Divine in the soul, mind, life, body of the individual creature. And we find in experience that this supreme light and force of action in its highest expression is at once an imperative law and an absolute freedom. It is an imperative law because it governs by immutable Truth our every inner and outer movement. And yet at each moment and in each movement the absolute freedom of the Supreme handles the perfect plasticity of our conscious and liberated nature.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL MAN

Spirituality is something else than intellectuality; its appearance is the sign that a Power greater than mind is striving to emerge in its turn.

It is quite true that to a surface view life seems only an operation of Matter, mind an activity of life, and it might seem to follow that what we call the soul or spirit is only a power of mentality, soul a fine form of mind, spirituality a high activity of the embodied mental being. But this is a superficial view of things due to the thought's concentrating on the appearance and process and not looking at what lies behind the process. One might as well on the same lines have concluded that electricity is only a product or operation of water and cloud matter, because it is in such a field that lightning emerges; but a deeper inquiry has shown that both cloud and water have, on the contrary, the energy of electricity as their foundation, their constituent power or energy-substance: that which seems to be a result is--in reality, though not in its form--the origin; the effect is in the essence pre-existent to the apparent cause, the principle of the emergent activity precedent to its present field of action. So it is throughout evolutionary

Nature; Matter could not have become animate if the principle of life had not been there constituting Matter and emerging as a phenomenon of life-in-matter; life-in-matter could not have begun to feel, perceive, think, reason, if the principle of mind had not been there behind life and substance, constituting it as its field of operation and emergent in the phenomenon of a thinking life and body: so too spirituality emerging in mind is the sign of a power which itself has founded and constituted life, mind and body and is now emerging as a spiritual being in a living and thinking body. How far this emergence will go, whether it will become dominant and transform its instrument, is a subsequent question; but what is necessary first to posit is the existence of spirit as something else than mind and greater than mind, spirituality as something other than mentality and the spiritual being therefore as something distinct from the mental being: spirit is a final evolutionary emergence because it is the original involutionary element and factor. Evolution is an inverse action of the involution3: what is an ultimate and last derivation in the involution is the first to appear in the evolution; what was original and primal in the involution is in the evolution the last and supreme emergence.

Spirituality is a progressive awakening to the inner reality of our being, to a spirit, self, soul which is other than our mind, life and body. It is an inner aspiration to know, to enter into contact and union with the greater Reality beyond, which also pervades the universe and dwells in us, and, as a result of that aspiration, that contact and that union, a turning, a conversion, a birth into a new being.

In the animal mind is not quite distinct from its own life-matrix and life-matter; its movements are so involved in the life movements that it cannot detach itself from them, cannot stand separate and observe them; but in man mind has become separate, he can become aware of his mental operations as distinct from his life operations, his thought and will can disengage themselves from his sensations and impulses, desires and emotional reactions, can become detached from them, observe and control them, sanction or cancel their functioning: he does not as yet know the secrets of his being well enough to be aware of himself decisively and with certitude as a mental being in a life and body, but he

has that impression and can take inwardly that position. So too at first soul in man does not appear as something quite distinct from mind and from mentalised life; its movements are involved in the mind movements, its operations seem to be mental and emotional activities; the mental human being is not aware of a soul in him standing back from the mind and life and body, detaching itself, seeing and controlling and moulding their action and formation: but, as the inner evolution proceeds, this is precisely what can, must and does happen,--it is the long-delayed but inevitable next step in our evolutionary destiny. There can be a decisive emergence in which the being separates itself from thought and sees itself in an inner silence as the spirit in mind, or separates itself from the life movements, desires, sensations, kinetic impulses and is aware of itself as the spirit supporting life, or separates itself from the body sense and knows itself as a spirit ensouling Matter: this is the discovery of ourselves as the Purusha, a mental being or a life-soul or a subtle self supporting the body.

This is taken by many as a sufficient discovery of the true self and in a certain sense they are right; for it is the self or spirit that so represents itself in regard to the activities of Nature, and this revelation of its presence is enough to disengage the spiritual element: but self-discovery can go farther, it can even put aside all relation to form or action of Nature. For it is seen that these selves are representations of a divine Entity to which mind, life and body are only forms and instruments: we are then the Soul looking at Nature, knowing all her dynamisms in us, not by mental perception and observation, but by an intrinsic consciousness and its direct sense of things and its intimate exact vision, able therefore by its emergence to put a close control on our nature and change it. When there is a complete silence in the being, either a stillness of the whole being or a stillness behind unaffected by surface movements, then we can become aware of a Self, a spiritual substance of our being, an existence exceeding even the soul individuality, spreading itself into universality, surpassing all dependence on any natural form or action, extending itself upward into a transcendence of which the limits are not visible. It is these liberations of the spiritual part in us which are the decisive steps of the spiritual evolution in Nature.

When there is the decisive emergence, one sign of it is the status or action in us of an inherent, intrinsic, self-existent consciousness which knows itself by the mere fact of being, knows all that is in itself in the same way, by identity with it, begins even to see all that to our mind seems external in the same manner, by a movement of identity or by an intrinsic direct consciousness which envelops, penetrates, enters into its object, discovers itself in the object, is aware in it of something that is not mind or life or body. There is, then, evidently a spiritual consciousness which is other than the mental, and it testifies to the existence of a spiritual being in us which is other than our surface mental personality. But at first this consciousness may confine itself to a status of being separate from the action of our ignorant surface nature, observing it, limiting itself to knowledge, to a seeing of things with a spiritual sense and vision of existence.

For action it may still depend upon the mental, vital, bodily instruments, or it may allow them to act according to their own nature and itself remain satisfied with self-experience and self-knowledge, with an inner liberation, an eventual freedom: but it may also and usually does exercise a certain authority, governance, influence on thought, life movement, physical action, a purifying uplifting control compelling them to move in a higher and purer truth of themselves, to obey or be an instrumentation of an influx of some diviner Power or a luminous direction which is not mental but spiritual and can be recognized as having a certain divine character, - the inspiration of a greater Self or the command of the Ruler of all being, the Ishwara.

Or the nature may obey the psychic4 entity's intimations, move in an inner light, follow an inner guidance. This is already a considerable evolution and amounts to a beginning at least of a psychic and spiritual transformation. But it is possible to go farther; for the spiritual being, once inwardly liberated, can develop in mind the higher states of being that are its own natural atmosphere and bring down a supramental energy and action which are proper to the Truth-consciousness; the ordinary mental instrumentation, life-instrumentation, physical instrumentation even, could then be entirely transformed and become parts no longer of an ignorance however much illumined, but of a

supramental creation which would be the true action of a spiritual truth-consciousness and knowledge.

It must therefore be emphasized that spirituality is not a high intellectuality, not idealism, not an ethical turn of mind or moral purity and austerity, not religiosity or an ardent and exalted emotional fervour, not even a compound of all these excellent things; a mental belief, creed or faith, an emotional aspiration, a regulation of conduct according to a religious or ethical formula are not spiritual achievement and experience.

These things are of considerable value to mind and life; they are of value to the spiritual evolution itself as preparatory movements disciplining, purifying or giving a suitable form to the nature; but they still belong to the mental evolution, - the beginning of a spiritual realization, experience, change is not yet there. Spirituality is in its essence an awakening to the inner reality of our being, to a spirit, self, soul which is other than our mind, life and body, an inner aspiration to know, to feel, to be that, to enter into contact with the greater Reality beyond and pervading the universe which inhabits also our own being, to be in communion with It and union with It, and a turning, a conversion, a transformation of our whole being as a result of the aspiration, the contact, the union, a growth or waking into a new becoming or new being, a new self, a new nature.

In her attempt to open up the inner being, Nature has followed four main lines--religion, occultism, spiritual thought and an inner spiritual realization and experience.

There are four main lines which Nature has followed in her attempt to open up the inner being, - religion, occultism, spiritual thought and an inner spiritual realization and experience: the three first are approaches, the last is the decisive avenue of entry. All these four powers have worked by a simultaneous action, more or less connected, sometimes in a variable collaboration, sometimes in dispute with each other, sometimes in a separate independence.

Religion has admitted an occult element in its ritual, ceremony, sacrements; it has leaned upon spiritual thinking, deriving from it sometimes a creed or theology, sometimes its supporting spiritual

philosophy, - the former, ordinarily, is the occidental method, the latter the oriental: but spiritual experience is the final aim and achievement of religion, its sky and summit.

Each of these means or approaches corresponds to something in our total being and therefore to something necessary to the total aim of her evolution. There are four necessities of man's self-expansion if he is not to remain this being of the surface ignorance seeking obscurely after the truth of things and collecting and systematizing fragments and sections of knowledge, the small limited and half-competent creature of the cosmic Force which he now is in his phenomenal nature. He must know himself and the world completely he must go behind his own and its exterior, he must dive deep below his own mental surface and the physical surface of Nature.

This he can only do by knowing his inner mental, vital, physical and psychic being6 and its powers and movements and the universal laws and processes of the occult Mind and Life which stand behind the material front of the universe: that is the field of occultism, if we take the word in its widest significance. He must know also the hidden Power or Powers that control the world: if there is a Cosmic Self or Spirit or a Creator, he must be able to enter into relation with It or Him and be able to remain in whatever contact or communion is possible, get into some kind of tune with the master Beings of the universe or with the universal Being and its universal will or a supreme Being and His supreme will, follow the law It gives him and the assigned or revealed aim of his life and conduct, raise himself towards the highest height that It demands of him in his life now or in his existence hereafter; if there is no such universal or supreme Spirit or Being, he must know what there is and how to lift himself to it out of his present imperfection and impotence.

This approach is the aim of religion: its purpose is to link the human with the Divine and in so doing sublimate the thought and life and flesh so that they may admit the rule of the soul and spirit. But this knowledge must be something more than a creed or a mystic revelation; his thinking mind must be able to accept it, to correlate it with the principle of things and the observed truth of the universe: this is the work of philosophy, and in the field of

the truth of the spirit it can only be done by a spiritual philosophy, whether intellectual in its method or intuitive. But all knowledge and endeavour can reach its fruition only if it is turned into experience and has become a part of the consciousness and its established operations; in the spiritual field of all this religious, occult or philosophical knowledge and endeavour must, to bear fruition, end in an opening up of the spiritual consciousness, in experiences that found and continually heighten, expand and enrich that consciousness with the truth of the spirit: this is the work of spiritual realization and experience.

Only spiritual realization and experience can achieve the change of the mental being into a spiritual being. But none of these [first] three lines of approach can by themselves entirely fulfil the greater and ulterior intention of Nature; they cannot create in mental man the spiritual being, unless and until they open the door to spiritual experience. It is only by an inner realization of what these approaches are seeking after, by an overwhelming experience or by many experiences building up an inner change, by a transmutation of the consciousness, by a liberation of the spirit from its present veil of mind, life and body that there can emerge the spiritual being. That is the final line of the soul's progress towards which the others are pointing and, when it is ready to disengage itself from the preliminary approaches, then the real work has begun and the turning-point of the change is no longer distant. Till then all that the human mental being has reached is a familiarity with the idea of things beyond him, with the possibility of an other-worldly movement, with the ideal of some ethical perfection; he may have made too some contact with greater Powers or Realities which help his mind or heart or life. A change there may be, but not the transmutationof the mental into the spiritual being. Religion and its thought and ethics and occult mysticism in ancient times produced the priest and the mage, the man of piety, the just man, the man of wisdom, many high points of mental manhood; but it is only after spiritual experience through the heart and mind began that we see arise the saint, the prophet, the Rishi,13 the Yogi, the seer, the spiritual sage and the mystic, and it is the religions in which these types of spiritual manhood came into being that have endured, covered the globe and given mankind all its spiritual aspiration and culture.

The last or highest emergence is the liberated man who has realized the Self and Spirit within him, entered into the cosmic consciousness, passed into union with the Eternal and, so far as he still accepts life and action, acts by the light and energy of the Power within him working through his human instruments of Nature. The largest formulation of this spiritual change and achievement is a total liberation of soul, mind, heart and action, a casting of them all into the sense of the cosmic Self and the Divine Reality. The spiritual evolution of the individual has then found its way and thrown up its range of Himalayan eminence and its peaks of highest nature. Beyond this height and largeness there opens only the supramental ascent or the incommunicable Transcendence.

Mysticism and spirituality have been criticized from two points of view.

These criticisms should be examined before proceeding further:

(1) The mystic turns away from life.

The mystic in this view is the man who turns aside into the unreal, into occult regions of a self-constructed land of chimeras and loses his way there . . . The mystic either detaches himself from life as the other-worldly ascetic or the aloof visionary and therefore cannot help life, or else he brings no better solution or result than the practical man or the man of intellect and reason.

To this kind of criticism one can reply that the true task of spirituality is not to solve human problems on the past or present mental basis, but to create a new foundation of our being and our life and knowledge. The ascetic or other-worldly tendency of the mystic is an extreme affirmation of his refusal to accept the limitations imposed by material Nature: for his very reason of being is to go beyond her; if he cannot transform her, he must leave her. At the same time the spiritual man has not stood back altogether from the life of humanity; for the sense of unity with all beings, the stress of a universal love and compassion, the will to spend the energies for the good of all creatures,* are central to the dynamic outflowering of the spirit: he has turned therefore to help, he has guided as did the ancient Rishis or the prophets, or stooped to create and, where he has done so with something

of the direct power of the Spirit, the results have been prodigious. But the solution of the problem which spirituality offers is not a solution by external means, though these also have to be used, but by an inner change, a transformation of the consciousness and nature.

If no decisive but only a contributory result, an accretion of some new finer elements to the sum of the consciousness, has been the general consequence and there has been no life-transformation, it is because man in the mass has always deflected the spiritual impulsion, recanted from the spiritual ideal or held it only as a form and rejected the inward change.

* Bhagavad-Gita. The Buddhist elevation of universal compassion, karuna, and sympathy (vasudhaiva kutumbakam, 'the whole earth is my family'), to be the highest principle of action, the Christian emphasis on love indicate this dynamic side of the spiritual being.

Spirituality cannot be called upon to deal with life by a non-spiritual method or attempt to cure its ills by the panaceas, the political, social or other mechanical remedies which the mind is constantly attempting and which have always failed and will continue to fail to solve anything. The most drastic changes made by these means change nothing; for the old ills exist in a new form: the aspect of the outward environment is altered, but man remains what he was; he is still an ignorant mental being misusing or not effectively using his knowledge, moved by ego and governed by vital desires and passions and the needs of the body, unspiritual and superficial in his outlook, ignorant of his own self and the forces that drive and use him. His life constructions have a value as expressions of his individual and collective being in the stage to which they have reached or as a machinery for the convenience and welfare of his vital and physical parts and a field and medium for his mental growth, but they cannot take him beyond his present self or serve as a machinery to transform him; his and their perfection can only come by his farther evolution. Only a spiritual change, an evolution of his being from the superficial mental towards the deeper spiritual consciousness, can make a real and effective difference. To discover the spiritual being in himself is the main business of the spiritual man and to help

others towards the same evolution is his real service to the race; till that is done, an outward help can succour and alleviate, but nothing or very little more is possible.

It is true that the spiritual tendency has been to look more beyond life than towards life. It is true also that the spiritual change has been individual and not collective; its result has been successful in the man, but unsuccessful or only indirectly operative in the human mass. The spiritual evolution of Nature is still in process and incomplete,--one might almost say, still only beginning,--and its main preoccupation has been to affirm and develop a basis of spiritual consciousness and knowledge and to create more and more a foundation or formation for the vision of that which is eternal in the truth of the spirit.

(2) Mystical knowledge is purely subjective.

Another objection to the mystic and his knowledge is urged, not against its effect upon life but against his method of the discovery of Truth and against the Truth that he discovers . . . But it is urged that the actual result of this method is not one truth common to all, there are great differences; the conclusion suggested is that this knowledge is not truth at all but a subjective mental formation. But this objection is based on a mis-understanding of the nature of spiritual knowledge. Spiritual truth is a truth of the spirit, not a truth of the intellect, not a mathematical theorem or a logical formula. It is a truth of the Infinite, one in an infinite diversity, and it can assume an infinite variety of aspects and formations: in the spiritual evolution it is inevitable that there should be a many-sided passage and reaching to the one Truth, many-sided seizing of it; this many-sidededness is the sign of the approach of the soul to a living reality, not to an abstraction or a constructed figure of things that can be petrified into a dead or stony formula. The hard logical and intellectual notion of truth as a single idea which all must accept, one idea or system of ideas defeating all other ideas or systems, or a single limited fact or single formula of facts which all must recognize, is an illegitimate transference from the limited truth of the physical field to the much more complex and plastic field of life and mind and spirit.

This transference has been responsible for much harm; it brings into thought narrowness, limitation, an intolerance of the

necessary variation and multiplicity of view-points without which there can be no totality of truth-finding, and by the narrowness and limitation much obstinacy in error. It reduces philosophy to an endless maze of sterile disputes; religion has been invaded by this misprision and infected with credal dogmatism, bigotry and intolerance.

The truth of the spirit is a truth of being and consciousness and not a truth of thought: mental ideas can only represent or formulate some facet, some mind-translated principle or power of it or enumerate its aspects, but to know it one has to grow into it and be it; without that growing and being there can be no true spiritual knowledge.

The fundamental truth of spiritual experience is one, its consciousness is one, everywhere it follows the same general lines and tendencies of awakening and growth into spiritual being; for these are the imperatives of the spiritual consciousness. But also there are, based on those imperatives, numberless possibilities of variation of experience and expression: the centralization and harmonization of these possibilities, but also the intensive sole following out of any line of experience are both of them necessary movements of the emerging spiritual Consciousness-Force within us. Moreover, the accomodation of mind and life to the spiritual truth, its expression in them, must vary with the mentality of the seeker so long as he has not risen above all need of such accomodation or such limiting expression. It is this mental and vital element which has created the oppositions that still divide spiritual seekers or enter into their differing affirmations of the truth that they experience. This difference and variation is needed for the freedom of spiritual search and spiritual growth: to overpass differences is quite possible, but that is most easily done in pure experience; in mental formulation the difference must remain until one can exceed mind altogether and in a highest consciousness integralize, unify and harmonize the many-sided truth of the Spirit.

The supreme Self is one, but the souls of the Self are many and as is the soul's formation of nature, so will be its spiritual self-expression. A diversity in oneness is the law of the manifestation; the supramental unification and integration must harmonize these

diversities, but to abolish them is not the intention of the Spirit in Nature.

The Triple Transformation

If the final goal of terrestrial evolution were only to awaken man to the supreme Reality and to release him from ignorance and bondage, so that the liberated soul could find elsewhere a higher state of being or merge into this supreme Reality, the task would be accomplished with the advent of the spiritual man. But there is also in us an aspiration for the mastery of Nature and her transformation, for a greater perfection in the earthly existence itself.

If it is the sole intention of Nature in the evolution of the spiritual man to awaken him to the supreme Reality and release him from herself, or from the Ignorance in which she as the Power of the Eternal has masked herself, by a departure into a higher status of being elsewhere, if this step in the evolution is a close and an exit, then in the essence her work has been already accomplished and there is nothing more to be done. The ways have been built, the capacity to follow them has been developed, the goal or last height of the creation is manifest; all that is left is for each soul to reach individually the right stage and turn of its development, enter into the spiritual ways and pass by its own chosen path out of this inferior existence. But we have supposed that there is a farther intention,--not only a revelation of the Spirit, but a radical and integral transformation of Nature. There is a will in her to effectuate a true manifestation of the embodied life of the Spirit, to complete what she has begun by a passage from the Ignorance to the Knowledge, to throw off her mask and to reveal herself as the luminous Consciousness-Force18 carrying in her the eternal Existence and its universal Delight of being. It then becomes obvious that there is something not yet accomplished, there becomes clear to view the much that has still to be done . . . there is a height still to be reached, a wideness still to be covered by the eye of vision, the wing of the will, the self-affirmation of the spirit in the material universe. What the evolutionary Power has done is to make a few individuals aware of their souls, conscious of their selves, aware of the eternal being that they are, to put them into communion with the Divinity or the reality which is concealed

by her appearances: a certain change of nature prepares, accompanies or follows upon this illumination, but it is not the complete and radical change which established a secure and settled new principle, a new creation, a permanent new order of being in the field of terrestrial Nature. The spiritual man has evolved, but not the supramental being who shall thenceforward be the leader of that Nature.

To be established permanently, this new order of existence demands a radical change of the entire human nature.

In this transformation, there are three phases.

It must become the normal nature of a new type of being; as mind is established here opon a basis of Ignorance seeking for Knowledge and growing into Knowledge, so supermind must be established here on a basis of Knowledge growing into its own greater Light. But this cannot be so long as the spiritual-mental being has not risen fully to supermind and brought down its powers into terrestrial existence. For the gulf between mind and supermind has to be bridged, the closed passages opened and roads of ascent and descent created where there is now a void and a silence . . . There must first be the psychic change, the conversion of our whole present nature into a soul-instrumentation; on that or along with that there must be the spiritual change, the descent of a higher Light, Knowledge, Power, Force, Bliss, Purity into the whole being, even into the lowest recesses of the life and body, even into the darkness of our subconscience; last, there must supervene the supramental transmutation, - there must take place as the crowing movement the ascent into the supermind and the transforming descent of the supramental Consciousness into our entire being and nature.

The first phase of this transformation can be called psychic: the soul, or psychic being, has to come forward and take the lead of the whole being.

At the beginning the soul in Nature, the psychic entity, whose unfolding is the first step towards a spiritual change, is an entirely veiled part of us, although it is that by which we exist and persist as individual beings in Nature. The other parts of our natural composition are not only mutable but perishable; but the psychic

entity in us persists and is fundamentally the same always: it contains all essential possibilities of our manifestation but is not constituted by them; it is not limited by what it manifests, not contained by the incomplete forms of the manifestation, not tarnished by the imperfections and impurities, the defects and deprivations of the surface being. It is an ever-pure flame of the divinity in things and nothing that comes to it, nothing that enters into our experience can pollute its purity or extinguish the flame. This spiritual stuff is immaculate and luminous and, because it is perfectly luminous, it is immediately, intimately, directly aware of truth of being and truth of nature; it is deeply conscious of truth and good and beauty because truth and good and beauty are akin to its own native character, forms of something that is inherent in its own substance. It is aware also of all that contradicts these things, of all that deviates from its own native character, of falsehood and evil and the ugly and the unseemly; but it does not become these things nor is it touched or changed by these opposites of itself which so powerfully affect its outer instrumentation of mind, life and body. For the soul, the permanent being in us, puts forth and uses mind, life and body as its instruments, undergoes the envelopment of their conditions, but it is other and greater than its members.

If the psychic entity had been from the beginning unveiled and known to its ministers, not a secluded King in a screened chamber, the human evolution would have been a rapid soul-outflowering, not the difficult, chequered and disfigured development it now is; but the veil is thick and we know not the secret Light within us, the light in the hidden crypt of the heart's innermost sanctuary. Intimations rise to our surface heart's innermost sanctuary. Intimations rise to our surface from the psyche, but our mind odes not detect their source; it takes them for its own activities because, before even they come to the surface, they are clothed in mental substance: thus ignorant of their authority, it follows or does not follow them according to its bent or turn at the moment. If the mind obeys the urge of the vital ego, then there is little chance of the psychic at all controlling the nature or manifesting in us something of its secret spiritual stuff and native movement; or, if the mind is over-confident to act in its own smaller light, attached to its own judgment, will and

action of knowledge, then also the soul will remain veiled and quiescent and wait for the mind's farther evolution. For the psychic part within is there to support the natural evolution, and the first natural evolution must be the development of body, life and mind, successively, and these must act each in its own kind or together in their ill-assorted partnership in order to grow and have experience and evolve. The soul gathers the essence of all our mental, vital and bodily experience and assimilates it for the farther evolution of our existence in Nature; but this action is occult and not obtruded on the surface. In the early material and vital stages of the evolution of being there is indeed no consciousness of soul; there are psychic activities, but the instrumentation, the form of these activities are vital and physical--or mental when the mind is active. For even the mind, so long as it is primitive or is developed but still too external, does not recognize their deeper character.

Man is in his self a unique Person, but he is also in his manifestation of self a multiperson; he will never succeed in being master of himself until the Person imposes itself on his multipersonality and governs it: but this can only be imperfectly done by the surface mental will and reason; it can be perfectly done only if he goes within and finds whatever central being is by its predominant influence at the head of all his expression and action. In inmost truth it is his soul that is this central being, but in outer fact it is often one or other of the part beings in him that rules, and this representative of the soul, this deputy self he can mistake for the inmost soul principle.

In the course of evolution, the soul, in order to emerge successfully and turn the being towards the supreme Reality, uses three dynamic images of this supreme Reality: Truth, Beauty and Good.

Three ways thus open before the seeker.

A first condition of the soul's complete emergence is a direct contact in the surface being with the spiritual Reality. Because it comes from that, the psychic element in us turns always towards whatever in phenomenal Nature seems to belong to a higher Reality and can be accepted as its sign and character. At first, it seeks this Reality through the good, the true, the beautiful, through

all that is pure and fine and high and noble: but although this touch through outer signs and characters can modify and prepare the nature, it cannot entirely or most inwardly and profoundly change it. For such an inmost change the direct contact with the Reality itself is indispensable since nothing else can so deeply touch the foundations of our being and stir it or cast the nature by its stir into a ferment of transmutation. Mental representations, emotional and dynamic figures have their use and value; Truth, Good and Beauty are in themselves primary and potent figures of the Reality, and even in their forms as seen by the mind, as felt by the heart, as realized in the life can be lines of an ascent: but it is in a spiritual substance and being of them and of itself that That which they represent has to come into our experience.

(1) The way of the intellect or of knowledge.

The soul may attempt to achieve this contact mainly through the thinking mind as intermediary and instrument; it puts a psychic impression on the intellect and the larger mind of insight and intuitional intelligence and turns them in that direction. At its highest the thinking mind is drawn always towards the impersonal; in its search it becomes conscious of a spiritual essence, an impersonal Reality which expresses itself in all these outward signs and characters but is more than any formulation or manifesting figure. It feels something of which it becomes intimately and invisibly aware, - a supreme Truth, a supreme Good, a supreme Beauty, a supreme Purity, a supreme Bliss; it bears the increasing touch, less and less impalpable and abstract, more and more spiritually real and concrete, the touch and pressure of an Eternity and Infinity which is all this that is and more. There is a pressure from this Impersonality that seeks to mould the whole mind into a form of itself; at the same time the impersonal secret and law of things becomes more and more visible. The mind develops into the mind of the sage, at first the high mental thinker, then the spiritual sage who has gone beyond the abstractions of thought to the beginnings of a direct experience. As a result the mind becomes pure, large, tranquil, impersonal; there is a similar tranquillizing influence on the parts of life: but otherwise the result may remain imcomplete; for the mental change leads more naturally towards an inner status and an outer quietude,

but, poised in this purifying quietism, not drawn like the vital parts towards a discovery of new life-energies, does not press for a full dynamic effect on the nature.

A higher endeavour through the mind does not change this balance; for the tendency of the spiritualized mind is to go on upwards and, since above itself the mind loses its hold on forms, it is into a vast formless and featureless impersonality that it enters. It becomes aware of the unchanging Self, the sheer Spirit, the pure bareness of an essential Existence, the formless Infinite and the nameless Absolute. This culmination can be arrived at more directly by tending immediately beyond all forms and figures, beyond all ideas of good or evil or true or false or beautiful or unbeautiful to That which exceeds all dualities, to the experience of a supreme oneness, infinity, eternity or other ineffable sublimation of the mind's ultimate and extreme percept of Self or Spirit. A spiritualized consciousness is achieved and the life falls quiet, the body ceases to need and to clamour, the soul itself merges into the spiritual silence. But this transformation through the mind does not give us the integral transformation; the psychic transmutation is replaced by a spiritual change on the rare and high summits, but this is not the complete divine dynamization of Nature.

(2) The way of the heart or of emotion.

A second approach made by the soul to the direct contact is through the heart: this is its own more close and rapid way because its occult seat is there, just behind in the heart-centre, in close contact with the emotinal being in us; it is consequently through the emotions that it can act best at the beginning with its native power, with its living force of concrete experience. It is through a love and adoration of the All-beautiful and All-blissful, the All-Good, the True, the spiritual Reality of love, that the approach is made; the aesthetic and emotional parts join together to offer the soul, the life, the whole nature to that which they worship. This approach through adoration can get its full power and impetus only when the mind goes beyond impersonality to the awareness of a supreme Personal Being: then all becomes intense, vivid, concrete; the heart's emotion, feeling, spiritualized sense reach their absolute; an entire self-giving becomes possible,

imperative. The nascent spiritual man makes his appearance in the emotional nature as the devotee, the bhakta;19 if, in addition, he becomes directly aware of his soul and its dictates, units his emotional with his psychic personality and changes his life and vital parts by purity, God-ecstasy, the love of God and men and all creatures into a thing of spiritual beauty, full of divine light and good, he develops into the saint and reaches the nature proper to this way of approach to the Divine Being. But for the purpose of an integral transformation this too is not enough; there must be a transmutation of the thinking mind and all the vital and physical parts of consciousness in their own character.

(3) The way of the will or action.

This larger change can be partly attained by adding to the experiences of the heart a consecration of the pragmatic will which must succeed in carrying with it - for otherwise it cannot be effective - the adhesion of the dynamic vital part which supports the mental dynamis and is our first instrument of outer action. This consecration of the will in works proceeds by a gradual elimination of the ego-will and its motive-power of desire; the ego subjects itself to some higher law and finally effaces itself, seems not to exist or exists only to serve a higher Power or a higher Truth or to offer its will and acts to the Divine Being as an instrument. The law of being and action or the light of Truth which then guides the seeker, may be a clarity or power or principle which he perceives on the highest height of which his mind is capable; or it may be a truth of the divine Will which he feels present and working within him or guiding him by a Light or a Voice or a Force or a Divine Person or Presence. In the end by this way one arrives at a consciousness in which one feels the Force or Presence acting within and moving or governing all the actions and the personal will is entirely surrendered or identified with that greater Truth-Will, Truth-Power or Truth-Presence.

These three ways, combined and followed concurrently, have a most powerful effect.

A combination of all these three approaches, the approach of the mind, the approach of the will, the approach of the heart, creates a spiritual or psychic condition of the surface being and nature in which there is a larger and more complex openness to

the psychic light within us and to the spiritual Self or the Ishwara, to the Reality now felt above the enveloping and penetrating us. In the nature there is a more powerful and many-sided change, a spiritual building and self-creation, the appearance of a composite perfection of the saint, the selfless worker and the man of spiritual knowledge.

A shifting of the consciousness, a withdrawal within, become imperative at this stage, in order to reach the central being, the true Soul, and to allow it to become the guide and sovereign of the nature.

But, for this change to arrive at its widest totality and profound completeness, the consciousness has to shift its centre and its static and dynamic position from the surface to the inner being; it is there that we must find the foundation for our thought, life and action. For to stand outside on our surface and to receive from the inner being and follow its intimations is not a sufficient transformation; one must cease to be the surface personality and become the inner Person, the Purusha . . . It then becomes possible to pass through to the depths of our being and from the depths so reached a new consciousness can be formed, both behind the exterior self and in it, joining the depths to the surface. There must grow up within us or there must manifest a consciousness more and more open to the deeper and the higher being, more and more laid bare to the cosmic Self and Power and to what comes down from the Transcendence, turned to a higher Peace, permeable to a greater light, force and ecstasy, a consciousness that exceeds the small personality and surpasses the limited light and experience of the surface mind, the limited force and aspiration of the normal life consciousness, the obscure and limited responsiveness of the body.

For this penetration into the luminous crypt of the soul one has to get through all the intervening vital stuff to the psychic centre within us, however long, tedious or difficult may be the process. The method of detachment from the insistence of all mental and vital and physical claims and calls and impulsions, a concentration in the heart, austerity, self-purification and rejection of the old mind movements and life movements, rejection of the ego of desire, rejection of the false needs and false habits, are all

useful aids to this difficult passage: but the strongest, most central way is to found all such or other methods on a self-offering and surrender of ourselves and our parts of nature to the Divine Being, the Ishwara. A strict obedience to the wise and intuitive leading of a Guide is also normal and necessary for all but a few specially gifted seekers.

Two principal results follow this emergence: first an effective guidance and mastery which unmask and reject all that is false and obscure or all that opposes the divine realization; then, a spontaneous influx of spiritual experiences of all kinds.

As the crust of the outer nature cracks, as the walls of inner separation break down, the inner light gets through, the inner fire burns in the heart, the substance of the nature and the stuff of consciousness refine to a greater subtlety and purity, and the deeper psychic experiences, those which are not solely of an inner mental or inner vital character, become possible in this subtler, purer, finer substance; the soul begins to unveil itself, the psychic personality reaches its full stature. The soul, the psychic entity, then manifests itself as the central being which upholds mind and life and body and supports all the other powers and functions of the Spirit; it takes up its greater function as the guide and ruler of the nature. A guidance, a governance begins from within which exposes every movement to the light of Truth, repels what is false, obscure, opposed to the divine realization: every region of the being, every nook and corner of it, every movement, formation, direction, inclination of thought, will, emotion, sensation, action, reaction, motive, disposition, propensity, desire, habit of the conscious or subconscious physical, even the most concealed, camouflaged, mute, recondite, is lighted up with the unerring psychic light, their confusions dissipated, their tangles disentangled, their obscurities, deceptions, self-deceptions precisely indicated and removed; all is purified, set right, the whole nature harmonized, modulated in the psychic key, put in spiritual order.

This is the first result, but the second is a free inflow of all kinds of spiritual experience, experience of the Self, experience of the Ishwara and the Divine Shakti, experience of cosmic consciousness, a direct touch with cosmic forces and with the occult movements of universal Nature, a psychic sympathy and

unity and inner communication and interchanges of all kinds with other beings and with Nature, illuminations of the mind by knowledge, illuminations of the heart by love and devotion and spiritual joy and ecstasy, illuminations of the sense and the body by higher experience, illuminations of dynamic action in the truth and largeness of a purified mind and heart and soul, the certitudes of the divine light and guidance, the joy and power of the divine force working in the will and the conduct. These experiences are the result of an opening outward of the inner and inmost being and nature; for then there comes into play the soul's power of unerring inherent consciousness, its vision, its touch on things which is superior to any mental cognition; there is there, native to the psychic consciousness in its pure working, an immediate sense of the world and its beings, a direct inner contact with them and a direct contact with the Self and with the Divine, - a direct knowledge, a direct sight of Truth and of all truths, a direct penetrating spiritual emotion and feeling, a direct intuition of right will and right action, a power to rule and to create an order of the being not by the gropings of the superficial self, but from within, from the inner truth of self and things and the occult realities of Nature.

The second phase of the transformation may be called spiritual; it is an opening to an Infinity above us, an eternal Presence, a boundless Self, an infinite Existence, an infinity of Consciousness, an infinity of Bliss, an All-Power.

But all this change and all this experience, though psychic and spiritual in essence and character, would still be, in its parts of life-effectuation, on the mental, vital and physical level . . . A highest spiritual transformation must intervene on the psychic or psycho-spiritual change; the psychic movement inward to the inner being, the Self or Divinity within us, must be completed by an opening upward to a supreme spiritual status or a higher existence. This can be done by our opening into what is above us, by an ascent of consciousness into the ranges of overmind and supramental nature in which the sense of self and spirit is ever unveiled and permanent and in which the self-luminous instrumentation of the self and spirit is not restricted or divided as in our mind-nature, life-nature, body-nature. This also the

psychic change makes possible; for as it opens us to the cosmic consciousness now hidden from us by many walls of limiting individuality, so also it opens us to what is now superconscient to our normality because it is hidden from us by the strong, hard and bright lid of mind,--mind constricting, dividing and separative. The lid thins, is slit, breaks asunder or opens and disappears under the pressure of the psycho-spiritual change and the natural urge of the new spiritualized consciousness towards that of which it is an expression here.

If the rift in the lid of mind is made, what happens is an opening of vision to something above us or a rising up towards it or a descent of its powers into our being. What we see by the opening of vision is an Infinity above us, an eternal Presence or an infinite Existence, an infinity of consciousness, an infinity of bliss, - a boundless Self, a boundless Light, a boundless Power, a boundless Ecstasy. It may be that for a long time all that is obtained is the occasional or frequent or constant vision of it and a longing and aspiration, but without anything further, because, although something in the mind, heart or other part of the being has opened to this experience, the lower nature as a whole is too heavy and obscure as yet for more. But there may be, instead of this first wide awareness from below or subsequently to it, an ascension of the mind to heights above. The nature of these heights we may not know or clearly discern, but some consequence of the ascent is felt; there is often too an awareness of infinite ascension and return but no record or translation of that higher state.

The spiritual change culminates in a permanent ascension from the lower consciousness to the higher consciousness, followed by an effective permanent descent of the higher nature into the lower.

In time the ascent comes to be made at will and the consciousness brings back and retains some effect or some gain of its temporary sojourn in these higher countries of the spirit. These ascents take place for many in trance, but are perfectly possible in a concentration of the waking consciousness or, where that consciousness has become sufficiently psychic, at any unconcentrated moment by an upward attraction or afinity. But these two types of contact with the superconscient, though they

can be powerfully illuminating, ecstatic or liberating, are by themselves insufficiently effective: for the full spiritual transformation more is needed, a permanent ascension from the lower into the higher consciousness and an effectual permanent descent of the higher into the lower nature.

A new consciousness begins to form with new forces of thought and sight, and a power of direct spiritual realization which is more than thought or sight.

This experience of descent can take place as a result of the other two movements or automatically before either has happened, through a sudden rift in the lid or a percolation, a downpour or an influx. A light descends and touches or envelops or penetrates the lower being, the mind, the life or the body; or a presence or a power or a stream of knowledge pours in waves or currents, or there is a flood of bliss or a sudden ecstasy; the contact with the superconscient has been established. For such experiences repeat themselves till they become normal, familiar and well-understood, revelatory of their contents and their significance which may have at first been involved and wrapped into secrecy by the figure of the covering experience.

For a knowledge from above begins to descend, frequently, constantly, then uninterruptedly, and to manifest in the mind's quietude or silence; intuitions and inspirations, revelations born of a greater sight, a higher truth and wisdom, enter into the being, a luminous intuitive discrimination works which dispels all darkness of understanding or dazzling confusions, puts all in order; a new consciousness begins to form, the mind of a high wide self-existent thinking knowledge or an illumined or an intuitive or an overmental consciousness with new forces of thought or sight and a greater power of direct spiritual realization which is more than thought or sight, a greater becoming in the spiritual substance of our present being; the heart and the sense become subtle, intense, large to embrace all existence, to see God, to feel and hear and touch the Eternal, to make a deeper and a closer unity of self and the world in a transcendent realization.

Other decisive experiences, other changes of consciousness determine themselves which are corollaries and consequences of this fundamental change. No limit can be fixed to this revolution;

for it is in its nature an invasion by the Infinite. For this new consciousness has itself the nature of infinity: it brings to us the abiding spiritual sense and awareness of the infinite and eternal with a great largeness of the nature and a breaking down of its limitations; immortality becomes no longer a belief or an experience but a normal self-awareness; the close presence of the Divine Being, his rule of the world and of our self and natural members, his force working in us and everywhere, the peace of the infinite, the joy of the infinite are now concrete and constant in the being; in all sights and forms one sees the Eternal, the Reality, in all sounds one hears it, in all touches feels it; there is nothing else but its forms and personalities and manifestations; the joy or adoration of the heart, the embrace of all existence, the unity of the spirit are abiding realities. The consciousness of the mental creature is turning or has been already turned wholly into the consciousness of the spiritual being. This is the second of the three transformations; uniting the manifested existence with what is above it, it is the middle step of the three, the decisive transition of the spiritually evolving nature.

To make this new creation permanent and perfect, the very foundation of our nature of ignorance must be transfigured and a greater power, a supramental Force must intervene to accomplish that transfiguration. This is the third phase:

The Supramental Transformation

As the psychic change has to call in the spiritual to complete it, so the first spiritual change has to call in the supramental transformation to complete it. For all these steps forward are, like those before them, transitional; the whole radical change in the evolution from a basis of Ignorance to a basis of Knowledge can only come by the intervention of the supramental Power and its direct action in earth-existence.

This then must be the nature of the third and final transformation which finishes the passage of the soul through the Ignorance and bases its consciousness, its life, its power and form of manifestation on a complete and completely effective self-knowledge. The Truth-Consciousness, finding evolutionary Nature ready, has to descend into her and enable her to liberate the

supramental principle within her; so must be created the supramental and spiritual being as the first unveiled manifestation of the truth of the Self and Spirit in the material universe.

The Ascent Towards SuperMind

It is difficult to conceive intellectually what the Super- mind is; and to describe it, another language would be needed than the poor abstract counters of the mind.

The psychic transformation and the first stages of the spiritual transformation are well within our conception; their perfection would be the perfection, wholeness, consummated unity of a knowledge and experience which is already part of things realized, though only by a small number of human beings. But the supramental change in its process carries us into less explored regions; it initiates a vision of heights of consciousness which have indeed been glimpsed and visited, but have yet to be discovered and mapped in their completeness.

The highest of these peaks or elevated plateaus of consciousness, the supramental, lies far beyond the possibility of any satisfying mental scheme or map of it or any grasp of mental seeing and description. It would be difficult for the normal unillumined or untransformed mental conception to express or enter into something that is based on so different a consciousness with a radically different awareness of things; even if they were seen or conceived by some enlightenment or opening of vision, another language than the poor abstract counters used by our mind would be needed to translate them into terms by which their reality could become at all seizable by us.

As the summits of human mind are beyond animal perception, so the movements of supermind are beyond the ordinary human mental conception: it is only when we have already had experience of a higher intermediate consciousness that any terms attempting to describe supramental being could convey a true meaning to our intelligence; for then, having experienced something akin to what is described, we could translate an inadequate language into a figure of what we knew. If the mind cannot enter into the nature of supermind, it can look towards it through these high and luminous approaches and catch some reflected impression of the

Truth, the Right, the Vast which is the native kingdom of the free Spirit.

The transition from mind to Supermind is a passage from Nature into Supernature. For that every reason it cannot be achieved by a mere effort of our mind or our unaided aspiration. Overmind and Supermind are involved and hidden in the earth-nature; but, in order that they may emerge in us, there is needed a pressure of the same powers already formulated in their full natural force on their own superconscient planes. The powers of the Super- conscience must descend into us and uplift us and trans- form our being.

The transition to Supermind through overmind is a passage from Nature as we know it into Super-Nature. It is by that very fact impossible for any effort of the mere Mind to achieve; our unaided personal aspiration and endeavour cannot reach it: our effort belongs to the inferior power of Nature; a power of the Ignorance cannot achieve by its own strength or characteristic or available methods what is beyond its own domain of nature. All the previous ascensions have been effectuated by a secret Consciousness-Force operating first in Inconscience and then in the Ignorance: it has worked by an emergence of its involved powers to the surface, powers concealed behind the veil and superior to the past formulations of Nature, but even so there is needed a pressure of the same superior powers already formulated in their full natural force on their own planes; these superior planes create their own foundation in our subliminal6 parts and from there are able to influence the evolutionary process on the surface.

Overmind and Supermind are also involved and occult in earth-Nature, but they have no formations on the accessible levels of our subliminal inner consciousness; there is as yet no overmind being or organized overmind nature, no supramental being or organized supermind nature acting either on our surface or in our normal subliminal parts: for these greater powers of consciousness are superconscient to the level of our ignorance. In order that the involved principles of Overmind and Supermind should emerge from their veiled secrecy, the being and powers of the superconscience must descend into us and uplift us and formulate

themselves in our being and powers; this descent is a sine qua non of the transition and transformation.

For a real transformation there must be a direct and unveiled intervention from above; there would be necessary too a total submission and surrender of the lower consciousness, a cessation of its insistence, a will in it for its separate law of action to be completely annulled by transformation and lose all rights over our being. If these two conditions can be achieved even now by a conscious call and will in the spirit and a participation of our whole manifested and inner being in its change and elevation, the evolution, the transformation can take place by a comparatively swift conscious change; the supramental Consciousness-Force from above and the evolving Consciousness-Force from behind the veil acting on the awakened awareness and will of the mental human being would accomplish by their united power the momentous transition. There would be no farther need of a slow evolution counting many millenniums for each step, the halting and difficult evolution operated by Nature in the past in the unconscious creatures of the Ignorance.

What should be the preparation for the supramental transformation?

First, an increasing control of the individual over his own nature and a more and more conscious participation in the action of the Supernature.

It is a first condition of this change that the mental Man we now are should become inwardly aware and in possession of his own deeper law of being and its processes; he must become the psychic and inner mental being master of his energies, no longer a slave of the movements of the lower Prakriti, in control of it, seated securely in a free harmony with a higher law of Nature.

In human mind there is the first appearance of an observing intelligence that regards what is being done and of a will and choice that have become conscious; but the consciousness is still limited and superficial: the knowledge also is limited and imperfect, it is a partial intelligence, a half understanding, groping and empirical in great part or, if rational, then rational by constructions, theories, formulas. There is not as yet a luminous seeing which

knows things by a direct grasp and arranges them with a spontaneous precision according to the seeing, according to the scheme of their inherent truth; although there is a certain element of instinct and intuition and insight which has some beginning of this power, the normal character of human intelligence is an inquiring reason or reflective thoght which observes, supposes, infers, concludes, arrives by labour at a constructed truth, a constructed scheme of knowledge, a deliberately arranged action of its own making.

It is only a free and entire intuitive consciousness which would be able to see and to grasp things by direct contact and penetrating vision or a spontaneous truth-sense born of an underlying unity or identity and arrange an action of Nature according to the truth of Nature. This would be a real participation by the individual in the working of the universal Consciousness-Force; the individual Purusha would become the master of his own executive energy and at the same time a conscious partner, agent, instrument of the Cosmic Spirit in the working of the universal Energy: the universal Energy would work through him, but he also would work through her and the harmony of the intuitive truth would make this double working a single action. A growing conscious participation of this higher and more intimate kind must be one accompaniment of the transition from our present state of being to a state of supernature.

Thus the individuality would become more and more powerful and effective in proportion as it realized itself as a centre and formation of the universal and transcendent Being and Nature. For as the progression of the change proceeded, the energy of the liberated individual would be no longer the limited energy of mind, life and body, with which it started; the being would emerge into and put on - even as there would emerge in him and descend into him, assuming him into it - a greater light of Consciousness and a greater action of Force: his natural existence would be the instrumentation of a superior Power, an overmental and supramental Consciousness-Force, the power of the original Divine Shakti. All the processes of the evolution would be felt as the action of a supreme and universal Consciousness, a supreme and universal Force working in whatever way it chose, on whatever

level, within whatever self-determined limits, a conscious working of the transcendent and cosmic Being, the action of the omnipotent and omniscient World-Mother raising the being into herself, into her supernature.

In place of the Nature of Ignorance with the individual as its closed field and unconscious or half-conscious instrument, there would be a Super-Nature of the divine Gnosis and the individual soul would be its conscious, open and free field and instrument, a participant in its action, aware of its purpose and process, aware too of its own greater Self, the universal, the transcendent Reality, and of its own Person as illimitably one with that and yet an individual being of Its being, an instrument and a spiritual centre.

A first opening toward this participation in an action of Supernature is a condition of the turn towards the last, the supramental transformation: for this transformation is the completion of a passage from the obscure harmony of a blind automatism with which Nature sets out to the luminous authentic spontaneity, the infallible motion of the self-existent truth of the Spirit.

The evolution begins with the automatism of Matter and of a lower life in which all obeys implicitly the drive of Nature, fulfils mechanically its law of being and therefore succeeds in maintaining a harmony of its limited type of existence and action; it proceeds through the pregnant confusion of the mind and life of a humanity driven by this inferior Nature but struggling to escape from her limitations, to master and drive and use her; it emerges into a greater spontaneous harmony and automatic self-fulfilling action founded on the spiritual Truth of things.

In this higher state the consciousness will see that Truth and follow the line of its energies with a full knowledge, with a strong participation and instrumental mastery, a complete delight in action and existence. There will be a luminous and enjoyed perfection of unity with all instead of a blind and suffered subjection of the individual to the universal, and at every moment the action of the universal in the individual and the individual in the universal will be enlightened and governed by the rule of the transcendent Supernature.

A second condition consists in a conscious obedience, a surrender of our whole being, to the light, the truth and force from above.

But this highest condition is difficult and must evidently take long to bring about; for the participation and consent of the Purusha to the transition is not sufficient, there must be also the consent and participation of the Prakriti. It is not only the central thought and will that have to acquiesce, but all the parts of our being must assent and surrender to the law of the spiritual Truth; all has to learn to obey the government of the conscious Divine Power in the members. There are obstinate difficulties in our being born of its evolutionary constitution which militate against this assent. For some of these parts are still subject to the inconscience and subconscience and to the lower automatism of habit or so-called law of the nature,--mechanical habit of mind, habit of life, habit of instinct, habit of personality, habit of character, the ingrained mental, vital, physical needs, impulses, desires of the natural man, the old functionings of all kinds that are rooted there so deep that it would seem as if we had to dig to abysmal foundations in order to get them out . . . At each step of the transition the assent of the Purusha is needed and there must be too the consent of each part of the nature to the action of the higher power for its change. There must be then a conscious self-direction of the mental being in us towards this change, this substitution of Supernature for the old nature, this transcendence. The rule of conscious obedience to the higher truth of the spirit, the surrender of the whole being to the light and power that come from the Supernature, is a second condition which has to be accomplished slowly and with difficulty by the being itself before the supramental transformation can become at all possible.

It follows that the psychic and the spiritual transformation must be far advanced, even as complete as may be, before there can be any beginning of the third and consummating supramental change; for it is only by this double transmutation that the self-will of the Ignorance can be totally altered into a spiritual obedience to the remoulding truth and will of the greater Consciousness of the Infinite. A long, difficult stage of constant effort, energism, austerity of the personal will, tapasya, has ordinarily to be traversed

before a more decisive stage can be reached in which a state of self-giving of all the being to the Supreme Being and the Supreme Nature can become total and absolute.

A third condition is the unification of the whole being around the true self and the opening of the individual to the cosmic consciousness.

A unification of the entire being by a breaking down of the wall between the inner and outer nature, - a shifting of the wall between the inner and outer nature, - a shifting of the position and centration of the consciousness from the outer to the inner self, a firm foundation on this new basis, a habitual action from this inner self and its will and vision and an opening up of the individual into the cosmic consciousness, - is another necessary condition for the supramental change. It would be chimerical to hope that the supreme Truth-consciousness can establish itself in the narrow formulation of our surface mind and heart and life, however turned towards spirituality. All the inner centers must have burst open and released into action their capacities; the psychic entity must be unveiled and in control. If this first change establishing the being in the inner and larger, a Yogic in place of an ordinary consciousness has not been done, the greater transmutation is impossible. Moreover the individual must have sufficiently universalized himself, he must have recast his individual mind in the boundlessness of a cosmic mentality, enlarged and vivified his individual life into the immediate sense and direct experience of the dynamic motion of the universal life, opened up the communications of his body with the forces of universal Nature, before he can be capable of a change which transcends the present cosmic formulation and lifts him beyond the lower hemisphere of universality into a consciousness belonging to its spiritual upper hemisphere. Besides he must have already become aware of what is now to him superconscient; he must be already a being conscious of the higher spiritual Light, Power, Knowledge, Ananda, penetrated by its descending influences, new-made by a spiritual change.

The spiritual evolution obeys the logic of a successive unfolding; it can take a new decisive main step only when the previous main step has been sufficiently conquered: even if certain

minor stages can be swallowed up or leaped over by a rapid and brusque ascension, the consciousness has to turn back to assure itself that the ground passed over is securely annexed to the new condition. It is true that the conquest of the spirit supposes the execution in one life or a few lives of a process that in the ordinary course of Nature would involve a slow and uncertain procedure of centuries or even of millenniums: but this is a question of the speed with which the steps are traversed; a greater or concentrated speed does not eliminate the steps themselves or the necessity of their successive surmounting. The increased rapidity is possible only because the conscious participation of the inner being is there and the power of the Supernature is already at work in the half-transformed lower nature, so that the steps which would otherwise have had to be taken tentatively in the night of Inconscience or Ignorance can now be taken in an increasing light and power of Knowledge.

Four steps of ascent lead from the human intelligence to the Supermind; these are:

(1) Higher Mind

Our first decisive step out of our human intelligence, our normal mentality, is an ascent into a higher Mind, a mind no longer of mingled light and obscurity or half-light, but a large clarity of the spirit. Its basic substance is a unitarian sense of being with a powerful multiple dynamization capable of the formation of a multitude of aspects of knowledge, ways of action, forms and significances of becoming, of all of which there is a spontaneous inherent knowledge . . . It is a luminous thought-mind, a mind of spirit-born conceptual knowledge.

But here in this greater Thought there is no need of a seeking and self-critical ratiocination, no logical motion step by step towards a conclusion, no mechanism f express or implied deductions and inferences, no building or deliberate concatenation of idea with idea in order to arrive at an ordered sum or outcome of knowledge...

This higher consciousness is a Knowledge formulating itself on a basis of self-existent all-awareness and manifesting some part of its integrality, a harmony of its significances put into thought-form. It can freely express itself in single ideas, but its

most characteristic movement is a mass ideation, a system or totality of truth-seeing at a single view; the relations of idea with idea, of truth with truth are not established by logic but pre-exist and emerge already self-seen in the integral whole. There is an initiation into forms of an ever-present but till now inactive knowledge, not a system of conclusions from premisses or data; this thought is a self-revelation of eternal Wisdom, not an acquired knowledge.

This is the Higher Mind in its aspect of cognition; but there is also the aspect of will, of dynamic effectuation of the Truth: here we find that this greater more brilliant Mind works always on the rest of the being, the mental will, the heart and its feelings, the life, the body, through the power of thought, through the idea-force. It seeks to purify through knowledge, to deliver through knowledge, to create by the innate power of knowledge.

The idea is put into the heart or the life as a force to be accepted and worked out; the heart and life become conscious of the idea and respond to its dynamisms and their substance begins to modify itself in that sense, so that the feelings and actions become the vibrations of this higher wisdom, are informed with it, filled with the emotion and the sense of it: the will and the life impulses are similarly charged with its power and its urge of self-effectuation; even in the body the idea works so that, for example, the potent thought and will of health replaces its faith in illness and its consent to illness, or the idea* (* The word expressing the idea has the same power if it is surcharged with the spiritual force; that is the rationale of the Indian use of the mantra.) of strength calls in the substance, power, motion, vibration of strength; the idea generates the force and form proper to the idea and imposes it on our substance of mind, life or matter. It is in this way that the first working proceeds; it charges the whole being with a new and superior consciousness, lays a foundation of change, prepares it for a superior truth of existence.

(2) Illumined Mind

This greater Force is that of the Illumined Mind, a Mind no longer of higher Thought, but of spiritual light. Here the clarity of the spiritual intelligence, its tranquil day-light, gives place or

subordinates itself to an intense lustre, a splendour and illumination of the spirit: a play of lightnings of spiritual truth and power breaks from above into the consciousness and adds to the calm and wide enlightenment and the vast descent of peace which characterize or accompany the action of the larger conceptual-spiritual principle, a fiery ardour of realization and a rapturous ecstasy of knowledge.

A downpour of inwardly visible Light very usually envelops this action; for it must be noted that, contrary to our ordinary conceptions, light is not primarily a material creation and the sense or vision of light accompanying the inner illumination is not merely a subjective visual image or a symbolic phenomenon: light is primarily a spiritual manifestation of the Divine Reality illuminative and creative; material light is a subsequent representation or conversion of it into Matter for the purposes of the material Energy.

There is also in this descent the arrival of a greater dynamic, a golden drive, a luminous enthousiasmos' of inner force and power which replaces the comparatively slow and deliberate process of the Higher Mind by a swift, sometimes a vehement, almost a violent impetus of rapid transformation.

The Illumined Mind does not work primarily by thought, but by vision; thought is here only a subordinate movement expressive of sight. The human mind, which relies mainly on thought, conceives that to be the highest or the main process of knowledge, but in the spiritual order thought is a secondary and a not indispensable process.

A consciousness that proceeds by sight, the consciousness of the seer, is a greater power for knowledge than the consciousness of the thinker. The perceptual power of the inner sight is greater and more direct than the perceptual power of thought: it is a spiritual sense that seizes something of the substance of

Truth and not only her figure; but it outlines the figure also and at the same time catches the significance of the figure, and it can embody her with a finer and bolder revealing outline and a larger comprehension and power of totality than thought-conception can manage.

(3) Intuitive Mind

But these two stages of the ascent enjoy their authority and can get their own united completeness only by a reference to a third level; for it is from the higher summits where dwells the intuitional being that they derive the knowledge which they turn into thought or sight and bring down to us for the mind's transmutation. Intuition is a power of consciousness nearer and more intimate to the original knowledge by identity; for it is always something that leaps out direct from a concealed identity . . .

This close perception is more than sight, more than conception: it is the result of a penetrating and revealing touch which carries in it sight and conception as part of itself or as its natural consequence. A concealed or slumbering identity, not yet recovering itself, still remembers or conveys by the intuition its own contents and the intimacy of its self-feeling and self-vision of things, its light of truth, its overwhelming and automatic certitude.

In the human mind the intuition is even such a truth-remembrance or truth-conveyance, or such a revealing flash or blaze breaking into a great mass of ignorance or through a veil of nescience: but we have seen that it is subject there to an invading mixture or a mental coating or an interception and substitution; there is too a manifold possibility of misinterpretation which comes in the way of the purity and fullness of its action. Moreover, there are seeming intuitions on all levels of the being which are communications rather than intuitions, and these have a very various provenance, value and character. The infrarational 'mystic', so styled, - for to be a true mystic it is not sufficient to reject reason and rely on sources of thought or action of which one has no understanding, - is often inspired by such communications on the vital level from a dark and dangerous source. In these circumstances we are driven to rely mainly on the reason and are disposed even to control the suggestions of the intuition - or the pseudo-intuition, which is the more frequent phenomenon, - by the observing and discriminating intelligence; for we feel in our intellectual part that we cannot be sure otherwise what is the true thing and what the mixed or adulterated article or false substitute. But this largely

discounts for us the utility of the intuition: for the reason is not in this field a reliable arbiter, since its methods are different, tentative, uncertain, an intellectual seeking; even though it itself really relies on a camouflaged intuition for its conclusions, - for without that help it could not choose its course or arrive at any assured finding, - it hides this dependence from itself under the process of a reasoned conclusion or a verified conjecture. An intuition passed in judicial review by the reason ceases to be an intuition and can only have the authority of the reason for which there is no inner source of direct certitude. But even if the mind became predominantly an intuitive mind reliant upon its portion of the higher faculty, the co-ordination of its cognitions and its separated activities, - for in mind these would always be apt to appear as a series of imperfectly connected flashes, - would remain difficult so long as this new mentality has not a conscious liaison with its suprarational source or a self-uplifting access to a higher plane of consciousness in which an intuitive action is pure and native.

Intuition is always an edge or ray or outleap of a superior light; it is in us a projecting blade, edge or point of a far-off supermind light entering into and modified by some intermediate truth-mind substance above us and, so modified, again entering into and very much blinded by our ordinary or ignorant mind substance; but on that higher level to which it is native its light is unmixed and therefore entirely and purely veridical, and its rays are not separated but connected or massed together in a play of waves of what might almost be called in the Sanskrit poetic figure a sea or mass of 'stable lightnings'. When this original or native Intuition begins to descend into us in answer to an ascension of our consciousness to its level or as a result of our finding of a clear way of communication with it, it may continue to come as a play of lightning-flashes, isolated or in constant action; but at this stage the judgment of reason becomes quite inapplicable, it can only act as an observer or registrar understanding or recording the more luminous intimations, judgements and discriminations of the higher power. To complete or verify an isolated intuition or discriminate its nature, its application, its limitations, the receiving consciousness must rely on another completing intuition or be able to call downa massed intuition

capable of putting all in place. For once the process of the change has begun, a complete transmutation of the stuff and activities of the mind into the substance, form and power of intuition is imperative; until then, so long as the process of consciousness depends upon the lower intelligence serving or helping out or using the intuition, the result can only be a survival of the mixed Knowledge-Ignorance uplifted or relieved by a higher light and force acting in its parts of Knowledge.

Intuition has a fourfold power. A power of revelatory truth-seeing, a power of inspiration or truth-hearing, a power of truth-touch or immediate seizing of significance, which is akin to the ordinary nature of its intervention in our mental intelligence, a power of true and automatic discrimination of the orderly and exact relation of truth to truth, - these are the fourfold potencies of Intuition. Intuition can therefore perform all the action of reason - including the function of logical intelligence, which is to work out the right relation of things and the right relation of idea with idea, - but by its own superior process and with steps that do not fail or falter.

(4) Overmind

The next step of the ascent brings us to the Overmind; the intuitional change can only be an introduction to this higher spiritual overture. But we have seen that the Overmind , even when it is selective and not total in its action, is still a power of cosmic consciousness, a principle of global knowledge which carries in it a delegated light from the supramental gnosis. It is, therefore, only by an opening into the cosmic consciousness that the overmind ascent and descent can be made wholly possible: a high and intense individual opening upwards is not sufficient, - to the vertical ascent towards summit Light there must be added a vast horizontal expansion of the consciousness into some totality of the Spirit.

When the overmind descends, the predominance of the centralizing ego-sense is entirely subordinated, lost in largeness of being and finally abolished; a wide cosmic perception and feeling of a boundless universal self and movement replaces it: many motions that were formerly ego-centric may still continue, but they occur as currents or ripples in the cosmic wideness. Thought, for the most part, no longer seems to originate individually in the body or the person but manifests from above or comes in upon the cosmic mind-waves: all inner individual sight or intelligence of things is now a revelation or illumination of what is seen or comprehended, but the source of the revelation is not in one's separate self but in the universal knowledge; the feelings, emotions, sensations are similarly felt as waves from the same cosmic immensity breaking upon the subtle and the gross body and responded to in kind by the individual centre of the universality; for the body is only a small support or even less, a point of relation, for the action of a vast cosmic instrumentation. In this boundless largeness, not only the separate ego but all sense of individuality, even of a subordinated or instrumental individuality, may entirely disappear; the cosmic existence, the cosmic consciousness, the cosmic delight, the play of cosmic forces are alone left: if the delight or the centre of Force is felt in what was the personal mind, life or body, it is not with a sense of personality but as a field of manifestation, and this sense of delight or of the action of Force is not confined to the person or the body but can be felt at all points in an unlimited consciousness of unity which pervades everywhere.

But there can be many formulations of overmind consciousness and experience; for the overmind has a great plasticity and is a field of multiple possibilities. In place of an uncentered and unplaced diffusion there may be the sense of the universe in oneself or as oneself: but there too this self is not the ego; it is an extension of a free and pure essential self-consciousness or it is an identification constituting a cosmic being, a universal individual . . . In the transition towards the supermind this centralizing action tends towards the discovery of a true individual replacing the dead ego, a being who is in his essence one with the supreme Self, one with the universe in extension and yet a cosmic centre and circumference of the specialized action of the Infinite.

The overmind change is the final consummating movement of the dynamic spiritual transformation; it is the highest possible status-dynamis of the spirit in the spiritual-mind plane. It takes up all that is in the three steps below it and raises their characteristic

workings to their highest and largest power, adding to them a universal wideness of consciousness and force, a harmonius concert of knowledge, a more manifold edlight of being. But there are certain reasons arising from its own characteristic status and power that prevent it from being the final possibility of the spiritual evolution. It is a power, though the highest power, of the lower hemisphere; although its basis is a cosmic unity, its action is an action of division and interaction, an action taking its stand on the play of the multiplicity. Its play is, like that of all Mind, a play of possibilities; although it acts not in the Ignorance but with the knowledge of the truth of these possibilities, yet it works them out through their own independent evolution of their powers.

The Overmind descent is not sufficient to transform wholly the Inconscience, the Supramental Force alone is capable of achieving this.

In the terrestrial evolution itself the overmind descent would not be able to transform in each man it touched the whole conscious being, inner and outer, personal and universally impersonal, into its own stuff and impose that upon the Ignorance illumining it into cosmic truth and knowledge. But a basis of Nescience would remain; it would be as if a sun and its system were to shine out in an original darkness of Space and illumine everything as far as its rays could reach so that all that dwelt in the light would feel as if no darkness were there at all in their experience of existence. But outside that sphere or expanse of experience the original darkness would still be there and, since all things are possible in an overmind structure, could reinvade the island of light created within its empire . . .

Also by this much evolution there could be no security against the downward pull of gravitation of the Inconscience which dissolves all the formations that life and mind build in it, swallows all things that arise out of it or are imposed upon it and disintegrates them into their original matter. The liberation from this pull of the Inconscience and a secured basis for a continuous divine or gnostic evolution would only be achieved by a descent of the Supermind into the terrestrial formula, bringing into it the supreme law and light and dynamics of the spirit and penetrating with it and transforming the inconscience of the material basis. A last

transition from Overmind to Supermind and a descent of Supermind must therefore intervene at this stage of evolutionary Nature.

A transformation of human nature can only be achieved when the substance of the being is so steeped in the spiritual principle that all its movements are a spontaneous dynamism and a harmonized process of the spirit. But even when the higher powers and their intensities enter into the substance of the Inconscience, they are met by this blind opposing Necessity and are subjected to this circumscribing and diminishing law of the nescient substance. It opposes them with its strong titles of an established and inexorable Law, meets always the claim of life with the law of death, the demand of Light with the need of a relief of shadow and a background of darkness, the sovereignty and freedom and dynamism of the spirit with its own force of adjustment by limitation, demarcation by incapacity, foundation of energy on the repose of an original Inertia. There is an occult truth behind its negations which only the Supermind with its reconciliation of contraries in the original Reality can take up and so discover the pragmatic solution of the enigma. Only the supramental Force can entirely overcome this difficulty of the fundamental Nescience; for with it enters an opposite and luminous imperative Necessity which underlies all things and is the original and final self-determining truth-force of the self-existent Infinite. This greater luminous spiritual Necessity and its sovereign imperative alone can displace or entirely penetrate, transform into itself and so replace the blind Ananke of the Inconscience.

THE GNOSTIC BEING

The difficulty in understanding and describing the supramental nature comes from the fact that in its very essence, it is consciousness and power of the Infinite.

As we reach in our thought the line at which the evolution of mind into overmind passes over into an evolution of overmind into supermind, we are faced with a difficulty which amounts almost to an impossibility. For we are moved to seek for some precise idea, some clear mental description of the supramental or gnostic existence of which evolutionary Nature in the Ignorance

is in travail; but by crossing this extreme line of sublimated mind the consciousness passes out of the sphere, exceeds the characteristic action and escapes from the grasp of mental perception and knowledge . . . Our normal perception or imagination or formulation of things spiritual and things mundane is mental, but in the gnostic change the evolution crosses a line beyond which there is a supreme and radical reversal of conscoiusness and the standards and forms of mental cognition are no longer sufficient: it is difficult for mental thought to understand or describe supramental nature.

Mental nature and mental thought are based on a consciousness of the finite; supramental nature is in its very grain a consciousness and power of the Infinite. Supramental Natures sees everything from the stand-point of oneness and regards all things, even the greatest multiplicity and diversity, even what are to the mind the strongest contradictions, in the light of that oneness, its will, ideas, feelings, sense are made of the stuff of oneness, its actions proceed upon that basis. Mental Nature, on the contrary, thinks, sees, wills, feels, senses with division as a starting-point and has only a constructed understanding of unity; even when it experiences oneness, it has to act from the oneness on a basis of limitation and difference. But the supramental, the divine life is a life of essential, spontaneous and inherent unity. It is impossible for the mind to forecast in detail what the supramental change must be in its parts of life action and outward behaviour or lay down for it what forms it shall create for the individual or the collective existence.

One can, however, describe in a general way the passage from the Overmind to the Supermind and form an idea of the supramental existence in its initial step.

This passage is the stage at which the supermind gnosis can take over the lead of the evolution from the overmind and build the first foundations of its own characteristic manifestation and unveiled activities; it must be marked therefore by a decisive but long-prepared transition from an evolution in the Ignorance to an always progressive evolution in the Knowledge. It will not be a sudden revelation and effectuation of the absolute Supermind and the supramental being as they are in their own plane, the swift apocalypse of a truth-conscious existence ever self-fulfilled and complete in self-knowledge; it will be the phenomenon of the supramental being descending into a world of evolutionary becoming and forming itself there, unfolding the powers of the gnosis within the terrestrial nature.

[This revelation] can assume the formula of a truth-conscious existence founded in an inherent self-knowledge but at the same time taking up into itself mental nature and nature of life and material body. For the supermind as the truth consciousness of the Infinite has in its dynamic principle the infinite power of a free self-determination. It can hold all knowledge in itself and yet put forward in formulation only what is needed at each stage of an evolution; it formulates whatever is in accordance with the Divine Will in manifestation and the truth of the thing to be manifested. It is by this power that it is able to hold back its knowledge, hide its own character and law of action and manifest overmind and under overmind a world or ignorance in which the being wills on its surface not to know and even puts itself under the control of a pervading Nescience. But in this new stage the veil thus put on will be lifted.

The supramental or gnostic being will be the perfect consummation of the spiritual man.

In the Ignorance one is there primarily to grow, to know and to do, or, more exactly to grow into something, to arrive by knowledge at something, to get something done. Imperfect, we have no satisfaction of our being, we must perforce strive with labour and difficulty to grow into something we are not; ignorant and burdened with a consciousness of our ignorance, we have to arrive at something by which we can feel that we know; bounded with incapacity, we have to hunt after strength and power; afflicted with a consciousness of suffering, we have to try to get something done by which we catch at some pleasure or lay hold on some satisfying reality to life. To maintain existence is, indeed, our first occupation and necessity, but it is only a starting-point: for the mere maintenance of an imperfect existence chequered with suffering cannot be sufficient as an aim of our being; the instinctive will of existence, the pleasure of existence, which is all that the Ignorance can make out of the secret underlying Power and

Ananda, has to be supplemented by the need to do and become. But what to do and what to become is not clearly known to us; we get what knowledge we can, what power, strength, purity, peace we can, what delight we can, become what we can. But our aims and our effort toward their achievement and the little we can hold as our gains turn into meshes by which we are bound; it is these things that become for us the object of life: to know our souls and to be our selves, which must be the foundation of our true way of being, is a secret that escapes us in our preoccupation with an external learning, an external construction of knowledge, the achievement of an external action, an external delight and pleasure. The spiritual man is one who has discovered his soul: he has found his self and lives in that, is conscious of it, has the joy of it; he needs nothing external for his completeness of existence. The gnostic being starting from this new basis takes up our ignorant becoming and turns it into a manifestation of the self-knowledge of being, all power and action into a power and action of the self-force of being, all delight into a universal delight of self-existence. Attachment and bondage will fall away, because at each step and in each thing there will be the full satisfaction of self-existence, the light of the consciousness fulfilling itself, the ecstasy of delight of existence finding itself. Each stage of the evolution in the knowledge will be an unfolding of this power and will of being and this joy to be, a free becoming supported by the sense of the Infinite, the bliss of the Brahman, the luminous sanction of the Transcendence.

The gnosis is the effective principle of the Spirit, a highest dynamis of the spiritual existence. The gnostic individual would be the consummation of the spiritual man; his whole way of being, thinking, living, acting would be governed by the power of a vast universal spirituality. All the trinities of the Spirit would be real to his self-awareness and realized in his inner life. All his existence would be fused into oneness with the transcendent and universal Self and Spirit; all his action would originate from and obey the supreme Self and Spirit's divine governance of Nature. All life would have to him the sense of the Conscious Being, the Purusha within, finding its self-expression in Nature; his life and all its thoughts, feelings, acts would be filled for him with that significance and built upon that foundation of its reality. He would feel the presence of the Divine in every centre of his consciousness, in every vibration of his life-force, in every cell of his body. In all the workings of his force of Nature he would be aware of the workings of the supreme World-Mother, the Supernature; he would see his natural being as the becoming and manifestation of the power of the World-Mother. In this consciousness he would live and act in an entire transcendent freedom, a complete joy of the spirit, an entire identity with the cosmic self and a spontaneous sympathy with all in the universe. All beings would be to him his own selves, all ways and powers of consciousness would be felt as the ways and powers of his own universality. But in that inclusive universality there would be no bondage to inferior forces, no deflection from his own highest truth: for this truth would envelop all truth of things and keep each in its own place, in a relation of diversified harmony, - it would not admit any confusion, clash, infringing of boundaries, any distortion of the different harmonies that constitute the total harmony. His own life and the world life would be to him like a perfect work of art; it would be as if the creation of a cosmic and spontaneous genius infallible in its working out of a multitudinous order. The gnostic individual would be in the world and of the world, but would also exceed it in his consciousness and live in his self of transcendence above it; he would be universal but free in the universe, individual but not limited by a separative individuality. The True Person is not an isolated entity, his individuality is universal; for he individualizes the universe: it is at the same time divinely emergent in a spiritual air of transcendental infinity, like a high cloud-surpassing summit; for he individualizes the divine Transcendence.

The law of the Supermind is unity fulfilled in diversity; unity does not imply uniformity.

A supramental or gnostic race of beings would not be a race made according to a single type, moulded in a single fixed pattern; for the law of the supermind is unity fulfilled in diversity, and therefore there would be an infinite diversity in the manifestation of the gnostic consciousness although that consciousness would still be one in its basis, in its constitution, in its all-revealing and all-uniting order . . . In the supramental race itself, in the variation of its degrees, the individuals would not be cast according to a

single type of individuality; each would be different from the other, a unique formation of the Being, although one with all the rest in foundation of self and sense of oneness and in the principle of his being.

In the lower grades of gnostic being, there would be a limitation of self-expression according to the variety of the nature, a limited perfection in order to formulate some side, element or combined harmony of elements of some Divine Totality, a restricted selection of powers from the cosmic figureof the infinitely manifold One. But in the supramental being this need of limitation for perfection would disappear; the diversity would not be secured by limitation but by a diversity in the power and hue of the Supernature: the same whole of being and the same whole of nature would express themselves in an infinitely diverse fashion; for each being would be a new totality, harmony, self-equation of the One Being. What would be expressed in front or held behind at any moment would depend not on capacity or incapacity, but on the dynamic self-choice of the Spirit, its delight of self-expression, on the truth of the Divine's will and joy of itself in the individual and, subordinately, on the truth of the thing that had to be done through the individual in the harmony of the totality. For the complete individual is the cosmic individual, since only when we have taken the universe into ourselves - and transcended it - can our individuality be complete.

The supramental being will realize the harmony of his individual self with the cosmic Self, of his individual will and action with the cosmic Will and Action.

The supramental being in his cosmic consciousness seeing and feeling all as himself would act in that sense; he would act in a universal awareness and a harmony of his individual self with the total self, of his individual will with the total will, of his individual action with the total action. For what we most suffer from in our outer life and its reactions upon our inner life is the imperfection of our relations with the world, our ignorance of others, our disharmony with the whole of things, our inability to equate our demand on the world with the world's demand on us. There is a conflict--a conflict from which there seems to be no ultimate issue except an escape from both world and self - between

our self-affirmation and a world on which we have to impose that affirmation, a world which seems to be too large for us and to pass indifferently over our soul, mind, life, body in the sweep of its course to its goal. The relation of our course and goal to the world's is unapparent to us, and to harmonzie ourselves with it we have either to enforce ourselves upon it and make it subservient to us or suppress ourselves and become subservient to it or else to compass a difficult balance between these two necessities of the relation between the individual personal destiny and the cosmic whole and its hidden purpose. But for the supramental being living in a cosmic consciousness the difficulty would not exist, since he has no ego; his cosmic individuality would know the cosmic forces and their movement and their significance as part of himself, and the truth-consciousness in him would see the right relation at each step and find the dynamic right expression of that relation.

For in fact both individual and universe are simultaneous and interrelated expressions of the same transcendent Being ...

One in self with all, the supramental being will seek the delight of self-manifestation of the Spirit in himself but equally the delight of the Divine in all: he will have the cosmic joy and will be a power for bringing the bliss of the spirit, the joy of being to others; for their joy will be part of his own joy of existence. To be occupied with the good of all beings, to make the joy and grief of others one's own has been described as a sign of the liberated and fulfilled spiritual man. The supramental being will have no need for that, of an altruistic self-effacement, since this occupation will be intimate to his self-fulfillment, the fulfilment of the One in all, and there will be no contradiction or strife between his own good and the good of others: nor will he have any need to acquire a universal sympathy by subjecting himself to the joys and griefs of creatures in the Ignorance; his cosmic sympathy will be part of his inborn truth of being and not dependent on a personal participation in the lesser joy and suffering; it will transcend what it embraces and in that transcendence will be its power. His feeling of universality, his action of universality will be always a spontaneous state and natural movement, an automatic expression of the Truth, an act of the joy of the spirit's self-

existence. There could be in it no place for limited self or desire or for the satisfaction or frustration of the limited self or the satisfaction or frustration of desire, no place for the relative and dependent happiness and grief that visit and afflict our limited nature; for these are things that belong to the ego and the Ignorance, not to the freedom and truth of the Spirit . . . The gnostic existence and delight of existence is a universal and total being and delight, and there will be the presence of that totality and universality in each separate movement: in each there will be, not a partial experience of self or a fractional bit of its joy, but the sense of the whole movement of an integral being and the presence of its entire and integral bliss of being, Ananda.

The transcendence aspect of the spiritual life is indispensable for the freedom of the Spirit; but it will harmonize with the manifested existence and give it an unshakable foundation.

For the gnostic being, to act in the world does not signify a lapse from unity. The gnostic life will be an inner life in which the antinomy of the inner and the outer, the self and the world will have been cured and exceeded. The gnostic being will have indeed an inmost existence in which he is alone with God, one with the Eternal, self-plunged into the depths of the Infinite, in communion with its heights and its luminous abysses of secrecy; nothing will be able to disturb or to invade these depths or bring him down from the summits, neither the world's contents nor his action nor all that is around him. This is the transcendence aspect of the spiritual life and it is necessary for the freedom of the spirit; for otherwise the identity in Nature with the world would be a binding limitation and not a free identity. But at the same time God-love and the delight of God will be the heart's expression of that inner communion and oneness, and that delight and love will expand itself to embrace all gnostic experience of the universe into a universal calm of equality not merely passive but dynamic, a calm of freedom in oneness dominating all that meets it, tranquilizing all that enters into it, imposing its law of peace on the supramental being's relations with the world in which he is living. Into all his acts the inner oneness, the inner communion will attend him and enter into his relations with others, who will not be to him others but selves of himself in the one existence,

his own universal existence. It is this poise and freedom in the spirit that will enable him to take all life into himself while still remaining the spiritual self and to embrace even the world of the Ignorance without himself entering into the Ignorance.

The gnostic being has the will of action but also the knowledge of what is to be willed and the power to effectuate its knowledge; it will not be led from ignorance to do what is not to be done. Moreover, its action is not the seeking for a fruit or result; its joy is in being and doing, in pure state of spirit, in pure act of spirit, in the pure bliss of the spirit . . . The gnostic being's knowledge self-realized in action will be, not an ideative knowledge, but the Real-Idea of the supermind, the instrumentation of an essential light of Consciousness; it will be the self-light of all the reality of being and becoming pouring itself out continually and filling every particular act and activity with the pure and whole delight of its self-existence. For an infinite consciousness with its knowledge by identity there is in each differentiation the joy and experience of the Identical, in each finite is felt the Infinite.

The gnostic consciousness will proceed towards an integral knowledge.

And that will not be a revelation or a delivery of light out of darkness, but of light out of light.

Mind seeks for light, for knowledge, - for knowledge of the one truth basing all, an essential truth of self and things, but also of all truth of diversity of that oneness, all its detail, circumstance, manifold way of action, form, law of movement and happening, various manifestation and creation; for thinking mind the joy of existence is discovery and the penetration of the mystery of creation that comes with knowledge. This the gnostic change will fulfil in an ample measure; but it will give it a new character. It will act not by the discovery of the unknown, but by the bringing out of the known; all will be the finding 'of the self by the self in the self'.

A replacement of intellectual seeking by supramental identity and gnostic intuition of the contents of the identity, an omnipresence of spirit with its light penetrating the whole process of knowledge and all its use, so that there is an integration between the knower, knowledge and the thing known, between the

operating consciousness, the instrumentation and the thing done, while the single self watches over the whole integrated movement and fulfils itself intimately in it, making it a flawless unit of self-effectuation, will be the character of each gnostic movement of knowledge and action of knowledge. Mind, observing and reasoning, labours to detach itself and see objectively and truly what it has to know; it tires to know it as not-self, independent other-reality not affected by process of personal thinking or by any presence of self: the gnostic consciousness will at once intimately and exactly know its object by a comprehending and penetrating identification with it. It will overpass what it has to know, but it will include it in itself; it will know the object as part of itself as it might know any part or movement of its own being, without any narrowing of itself by the identification or snaring of its thought in it so as to be bound or limited in knowledge. There will be the intimacy, accuracy, fullness of a direct internal knowledge, but not that misleading by personal mind by which we constantly err, because the consciousness will be that of a universal and not a restricted and ego-bound person. It will proceed towards all knowledge, not setting truth against truth to see which will stand and survive, but completing truth by truth in the light of the one Truth of which all are the aspects . . . There will be an unfolding, not as a delivery of light out of darkness, but as a delivery of light out of itself; for if an evolving supramental Consciousness holds back part of its contents of self-awareness behind in itself, it does this not as a step or by an act of Ignorance, but as the movement of a deliberate bringing out of its timeless knowledge into a process of Time-manifestation.

The joy of an intimate self-revealing diversity of the One, the multitudinous union and happy interaction within the One, will give a fully perfected sense to the gnostic life.

As mind seeks for light, for the discovery of knowledge and for mastery by knowledge, so life seeks for the development of its own force and for mastery by force: its quest is for growth, power, conquest, possession, satisfaction, creation, joy, love, beauty; its joy of existence is in a constant self-expression, development, diverse manifoldness of action, creation, enjoyment, an abundant and strong intensity of itself and its power. The gnostic evolution

will lift that to its highest and fullest expression, but it will not act for the power, satisfaction, enjoyment of the mental or vital ego, for its narrow possession of itself and its eager ambitious grasp on others and on things or for its greater self-affirmation and magnified embodiment; for in that way no spiritual fulness and perfection can come. The gnostic life will exist and act for the Divine in itself and in the world, for the Divine in all; the increasing possession of the individual being and the world by the Divine Presence, Light, Power, Love, Delight, Beauty will be the sense of life to the gnostic being. In the more and more perfect satisfaction of that growing manifestation will be the individual's satisfaction: his power will be the instrumentation of the power of Supernature for bringing in and extending that greater life and nature; whatever conquest and adventure will be there, will be for that only and not for the reign of any individual or collective ego. Love will be for him the contact, meeting, union of self with self, of spirit with spirit, a unification of being, a power and joy and intimacy and closeness of soul to soul, of the One to the One, a joy of identity and the consequences of a diverse identity. It is this joy of an intimate self-revealing diversity of the One, the multitudinous union of the One and a happy interaction in the identity, that will be for him the full revealed sense of life. Creation aesthetic or dynamic, mental creation, life creation, material creation will have for him the same sense. It will be the creation of significant forms of the Eternal Force, Light, Beauty, Reality, - the beauty and truth of its forms and bodies, the beauty and truth of its powers and qualities, the beauty and truth of its spirit, its formless beauty of self and essence.

As a consequence of the total change and reversal of consciousness establishing a new relation of spirit with mind and life and matter, and a new significance and perfection in the relation, there will be a reversal, a perfecting new significance also of the relations between the spirit and the body it inhabits.

Matter will reveal itself as an instrument of the manifestation of Spirit; a new liberated and sovereign acceptance of material Nature will then be possible.

This new relation of the spirit and the body assumes - and makes possible - a free acceptance of the whole of material Nature

in place of a rejection; the drawing back from her, the refusal of all identification or acceptance, which is the first normal necessity of the spiritual consciousness for its liberation, is no longer imperative. To cease to be identified with the body, to separate oneself from the body consciousness, is a recognized and necessary step whether towards spiritual liberation or towards spiritual perfection and mastery over Nature. But, this redemption once effected, the descent of the spiritual light and force can invade and take up the body also and there can be a new liberated and sovereign acceptance of material Nature. That is possible, indeed, only if there is a changed communion of the Spirit with Matter, a control, a reversal of the present balance of interaction which allows physical Nature to veil the Spirit and affirm her own dominance. In the light of a larger knowledge Matter also can be seen to be the Brahman, a self-energy put forth by the Brahman, a form and substance of Brahman; aware of the secret consciousness within material substance, secure in this larger knowledge, the gnostic light and power can unite itself with Matter, so seen, and accept it as an instrument of a spiritual manifestation. A certain reverence, even, for Matter and a sacramental attitude in all dealing with it is possible ...

The gnostic being, using Matter but using it without material or vital attachment or desire, will feel that he is using the Spirit in this form of itself with its consent and sanction for its own purpose. There will be in him a certain respect for physical things, an awareness of the occult consciousness in them, of its dumb will of utility and service, a worship of the Divine, the Brahman in what he used, a care for a perfect and faultless use of his divine material, for a true rhythm, ordered harmony, beauty in the life of Matter, in the utilization of Matter.

The body will become a faithful and capable instrument, perfectly responsive to the Spirit.

For the law of the body arises from the subconscient or inconscient: but in the gnostic being the subconscient will have become conscious and subject to the supramental control, penetrated with its light and action; the basis of inconscience with its obscurity and ambiguity, its obstruction or tardy responses will have been transformed into a lower or supporting superconscience

by the supramental emergence. Already even in the realized higher-mind being and in the intuitive and overmind being the body will have become sufficiently conscious to respond to the influence of the Idea and the Will-Force so that the action of mind on the physical parts, which is rudimentary, chaotic and mostly involuntary in us, will have developed a considerable potency: but in the supramental being it is the consciousness with the Real-Idea in it which will govern everything. This real-idea is a truth-perception which is self-effective; for it is the idea and will of the spirit in direct action and originates a movement of the substance of being which must inevitably effectuate itself in state and act of being. It is this dynamic irresistible spiritual realism of the Truth-consciousness in the highest degree of itself that will have here grown conscient and consciously competent in the evolved gnostic being: it will not act as now, veiled in an apparent inconscience and self-limited by law of mechanism, but as the sovereign Reality in self-effectuating action. It is this that will rule the existence with an entire knowledge and power and include in its rule the functioning and action of the body. The body will be turned by the power of the spiritual consciousness into a true and fit and perfectly responsive instrument of the Spirit.

Health, strength, duration, bodily happiness and ease, liberation from suffering, are a part of the physical perfection which the gnostic evolution is called upon to realize.

As a result of this new relation between the Spirit and the body, the gnostic evolution will effectuate the spiritualization, perfection and fulfilment of the physical being; it will do for the body as for the mind and life. Apart from the obscurity, frailties and limitations, which this change will overcome, the body-consciousness is a patient servant and can be in its large reserve of possibilities a potent instrument of the individual life, and it asks for little on its own account: what it craves for is duration, health, strength, physical perfection, bodily happiness, liberation from suffering, ease. These demands are not in themselves unacceptable, mean or illegitimate, for they render into the terms of Matter the perfection of form and substance, the power and delight which should be the natural outflowing, the expressive manifestation of the Spirit. When the gnostic Force can act in the

body, these things can be established; for their opposites come from a pressure of external forces on the physical mind, on the nervous and material life, on the body-organism, from an ignorance that does not know how to meet these forces or is not able to meet them rightly or with power, and from some obscurity, pervading the stuff of the physical consciousness and distorting its responses, that reacts to them in a wrong way.

It is the incompleteness and weakness of the Consciousness-Force manifested in the mental, vital and physical being, its inability to receive or refuse at will, or, receiving, to assimilate or harmonize the contacts of the universal Energy cast upon it, that is the cause of pain and suffering. In the material realm Nature starts with an entire insensibility, and it is a notable fact that either a comparative insensibility or a deficient sensibility or, more often, a greater endurance and hardness to suffering is found in the beginning of life, in the animal, in primitive or less developed man; as the human being grows in evolution, he grows in sensibility and suffers more keenly in mind and life and body. For the growth in consciousness is not sufficiently supported by a growth in force; the body becomes more subtle, more finely capable, but less solidly efficient in its external energy: man has to call in his will, his mental power to dynamize, correct and control his nervous being, force it to the strenuous tasks he demands from his instruments, steel it against suffering and disaster. In the spiritual ascent this power of the consciousness and its will over the instruments, the control of spirit and inner mind over the outer mentality and the nervous being and the body, increases immensely; a tranquil and wide equality of the spirit to all shocks and contacts comes in and becomes the habitual poise, and this can pass from the mind to the vital parts and establish there too an immense and enduring largeness of strength and peace; even in the body this state may form itself and meet inwardly the shocks of grief and pain and all kinds of suffering. Even, a power of willed physical insensibility can intervene or a power of mental separation from all shock and injury can be acquired which shows that the ordinary reactions and the debile submission of the bodily self to the normal habits of response of material Nature are not obligatory or unalterable. Still more significant is the power that comes on the level of spiritual mind or overmind to change the vibrations of pain into

vibrations of Ananda: even if this were to go only up to a certain point, it indicates the possibility of an entire reversal of the ordinary rule of the reacting consciousness; it can be associated too with a power of self-protection that turns away the shocks that are more difficult to transmute or to endure. The gnostic evolution at a certain stage must bring about a completeness of this reversal and of this power of self-protection which will fulfil the claim of the body for immunity and serenity of its being and for deliverance from suffering and build in it a power for the total delight of existence. A spiritual Ananda can flow into the body and inundate cell and tissue; a luminous materialization of this higher Ananda could of itself bring about a total transformation of the deficient or adverse sensibilities of physical Nature.

A vast calm and a deep delight of the gnostic existence rise together in a growing intensity and culminate in an eternal ecstasy. In the universal phenomenon is revealed the eternal Bliss, Ananda.

An aspiration, a demand for the supreme and total delight of existence is there secretly in the whole make of our being, but it is diguised by the separation of our parts of nature and their differing urge and obscured by their inability to conceive or seize anything more than a superficial pleasure. In the body consciousness this demand takes shape as a need of bodily happiness, in our life parts as a yearning for life happiness, a keen vibrant response to joy and rapture of many kinds and to all surprise of satisfaction; in the mind it shapes into a ready reception of all forms of mental delight; on a higher level it becomes apparent in the spitiual mind's call for peace and divine ecstasy. This trend is founded in the truth of the being; for Ananda is the very essence of the Brahman, it is the supreme nature of the omnipresent Reality. The supermind itself in the descending degrees of the manifestation emerges from the Ananda and in the evolutionary ascent merges into the Ananda. It is not, indeed, merged in the sense of being extinguished or abolished but is there inherent in it, indistinguishable from the self of awareness and the self-effectuating force of the Bliss of Being. In the involutionary descent as in the evolutionary return supermind is supported by the original Delight of Existence and carries that in it in all its activities as thier sustaining essence; for Consciousness, we may say, is its

parent power in the Spirit, but Ananda is the spiritual matrix from which it manifests and the maintaining source into which it carries back the soul in its return to the status of the Spirit. A supramental manifestation in its ascent would have as a next sequence and culmination of self-result a manifestation of the Bliss of the Brahman: the evolution of the being of gnosis would be followed by an evolution of the being of bliss; an embodiment of gnostic existence would have as its consequence an embodiment of the beatific existence.

In the liberation of the soul from the Ignorance the first foudation is peace, calm, the silence and quietude of the Eternal and Infinite; but a consummate power and greater formation of the spiritual ascension takes up this peace of liberation into the bliss of a perfect experience and realization of the eternal beatitude, the bliss of the Eternal and Infinite . . .

Peace and ecstasy cease to be different and become one. The supermind, reconciling and fusing all differences as well as all contradictions, brings out this unity; a wide calm and a deep delight of all-existence are among its first steps of self-realization, but this calm and this delight rise together, as one state, into an increasing intensity and culminate in the eternal ecstasy, the bliss that is the Infinite. In the gnostic consciousness at any stage there would be always in some degree this fundamental and spiritual conscious delight of existence in the whole depth of the being; but also all the movements of Nature would be pervaded by it, and all the actions and reactions of the life and the body: none could escape the law of the Ananda. Even before the gnostic change there can be a beginning of this fundamental ecstasy of being translated into a calm of intense delight of spiritual perception and vision and knowledge, in the heart into a wide or deep or passionate delight of universal union and love and sympathy and the joy of beings and the joy of things. In the will and vital parts it is felt as the energy of delight of a divine life-power in action or a beatitude of the senses perceiving and meeting the One everywhere, perceiving as their normal aesthesis of things a universal beauty and a secret harmony of creation of which our mind can catch only imperfect glimpses or a rare supernormal sense. In the body it reveals itself as an ecstasy pouring into it from

the heights of the spirit and the peace and bliss of a pure and spiritualized physical existence. A universal beauty and glory of being begins to manifest; all objects reveal hidden lines, vibrations, powers, harmonic significances concealed from the normal mind and the physical sense. In the universal phenomenon is revealed the eternal Ananda.

Two questions remain to be examind, which are important for the human conception of life.

(1) What is the Place of Personality in the Gnostic Being?

Ordinarily, in the common notion, the separative ego is our self and, if ego has to disappear in a transcendental or universal Consciousness, personal life and action must cease; for, the individual disappearing, there can only be an impersonal consciousness, a cosmic self: but if the individual is altogether extinguished, no further question of personality or responsibility or ethical perfection can arise. According to another line of ideas the spiritual person remains, but liberated, purified, perfected in nature in a celestial existence. But here we are still on earth, and yet it is supposed that the ego personality is extinguished and replaced by a universalized spiritual individual who is a centre and power of the transcendent Being. It might be deduced that this gnostic or supramental individual is a self without personality, an impersonal Purusha. There could be many gnostic individuals but there would be no personality, all would be the same in being and nature.

In the gnostic consciousness personality and impersonality are not opposing principles; they are inseparable aspects of one and the same reality.

This reality is not the ego but the being, who is impersonal and universal in his stuff of nature, but forms out of it an expressive personality which is his form of self in the changes of Nature . . . The Divine, the Eternal, expresses himself as existence, consciousness, bliss, wisdom, knowledge, love, beauty, and we can think of him as these impersonal and universal powers of himself, regard them as the nature of the Divine and Eternal; we can say that God is Love, God is Wisdom, God is Truth or Righteousness: but he is not himself an impersonal state or abstract

of states of qualities; he is the Being, at once absolute, universal and individual. If we look at it from this basis, there is, very clearly, no opposition, no incompatibility, no impossibility of a co-existence or one-existence of the Impesonal and the Person; they are each other, live in one another, melt into each other, and yet in a way can appear as if different ends, sides, obverse and reverse of the same Reality. The gnostic being is of the nature of the Divine and therefore repeats in himself this natural mystery of existence.

What will be the Nature of the Gnostic Person?

The ordinary restricted personality can be grasped by a description of the characters stamped on its life and thought and action, its very definite surface building and expression of self . . . But such a description would be pitifully inadequate to express the Person when its Power of Self within manifests more amply and puts forward its hidden daemonic force in the surface composition and the life. We feel ourselves in presence of a light of consciousness, a potency, a sea of energy, can distinguish and describe its free waves of action and quality, but not fix itself; and yet there is an impression of personality, the presence of a powerful being, a strong, high or beautiful recognizable Someone, a Person, not a limited creature of Nature but a Self or Soul, a Purusha. The gnostic Individual would be such an inner Person unveiled, occupying both the depths--no longer self-hidden - and the surface in a unified self-awareness; he would not be a surface personality partly expressive of a larger secret being, he would be not the wave but the ocean: he would be the Purusha, the inner conscious Existence self-revealed, and would have no need of a carved expressive mask or persona.

This, then, would be the nature of the gnostic Person, an infinite and universal being revealing - or, to our mental ignorance, suggesting - its eternal self through the significant form and expressive power of an individual and temporal self-manifestation. But the individual nature-manifestation, whether strong and distinct in outline or multitudinous and protean but still harmonic, would be there as an index of the being, not as the whole being: that would be felt behind, recongizable but indefinable, infinite. The consciousness also of the gnostic Person would be an infinite

consciousness throwing up forms of self-expression, but aware always of its unbound infinity and universality and conveying the power and sense of its infinity and universality even in the finiteness of the expression, - by which, moroever, it would not be bound in the next movement of farther self-revelation. But this would still not be an unregulated un-recognizable flux but a process of self-revelation. But this would still ont be an unregulated un-recognizable flux but a process of self-revelation making visible the inherent truth of its powers of existence according to the harmonic law natural to all manifestation of the Infinite.

(2) If there is a gnostic personality and if it is in some way responsible for its acts, what is the place of the ethical element in the gnostic nature, what is its perfection and its fulfilment?

The law, the standard has to be imposed on us now because there is in our natural being an opposite force of separateness, a possibility of antagonism, a force of discord, ill-will, strife. All ethics is a construction of good in a Nature which has been smitten with evil by the powers of darkness born of the Ignorance, even as it is expressed in the ancient legend of the Vedanta. But where all is self-determined by truth of consciousness and truth of being, there can be no standard, no struggle to observe it, no virtue or merit, no sin or demerit of the nature. The power of love, of truth, of right will be there, not as a law mentally constructed but as the very substance and consitution of the nature and, by the integration of the being, necessarily also the very stuff and constituting nature of the action. To grow into this nature of our true being, a nature of spiritual truth and oneness, is the liberation attained by an evolution of the spiritual being: the gnostic evolution gives us the complete dynamism of that return to ourselves. Once that is done, the ned of standards of virtue, dharmas, disappears; there is the law and self-order of the liberty of the spirit, there can be no imposed or constructed law of conduct, dharma. All becomes a self-flow of spiritual-nature, swadharma of swabhava.

The gnostic life will reconcile freedom and order.

There will be an entire accord between the free expression of the individual and his obedience to the inherent law of the supreme and universal Truth of things.

A separate self-existent being could be at odds with other separate beings, at variance with the universal All in which they co-exist, in a state of contradiction with any supreme Truth that was willing its self-expression in the universe; this is what happens to the individual in the Ignorance, because he takes his stand on the consciousness of a separate individuality. There can be a similar conflict, discord, disparity between the truths, the energies, qualities, powers, modes of being that act as separate forces in the individual and in the universe. A world full of conflict, a conflict in ourselves, a conflict of the individual with the world around him are normal and inevitable features of the separative consciousness of the Ignorance and our ill-harmonized existence. But this cannot happen in the gnostic consciousness because there each finds his complete self and all find their own truth and the harmony of their different motions in that which exceeds them and of which they are the expression. In the gnostic life, therefore, there is an entire accord between the free self-expression of the being and his automatic obedience to the inherent law of the supreme and universal Truth of things. These are to him interconnected sides of the one Truth; it is his own supreme truth of being which works itself out in the whole united truth of himself and things in one supernature.

The two principles of freedom and order, which in mind and life are constantly representing themselves as contraries or incompatibles, though they have no need to be that if freedom is guarded by knowledge and order based upon truth of being, are in the supermind consciousness native of each other and even fundamentally one. This is so because both are inseparable aspects of the inner spiritual truth and therefore their determinations are one; they are inherent in each other, for they arise from an identity and therefore in actoin coincide in a natural identity. The gnostic being does not in any way or degree feel his liberty infringed by the imperative order of his thought or actions, because that order is intrinsic and spontaneous; he feels both his liberty and the order of his liberty to be one truth of his being. His liberty of knowledge is not a freedom to follow falsehood or error, for he does not need like the mind to pass through the possibility of error in order to know, - on the contrary, any such deviation would be a departure from his plenitude of the gnostic self, it would be a diminution of his self-truth and alien and injurious to his being; for his freedom is a freedom of light, not of darkness. His liberty of action is not a licence to act upon wrong will or the impulsions of the Ignorance, for that too would be alien to his being, a restriction and diminution of it, not a liberation. A drive for fulfilment of falsehood or wrong will would be felt by him, not as a movement towards freedom, but as a violence done to the liberty of the spirit, an invasion and imposition, an inroad upon his supernature, a tyranny of some alien Nature.

A similar inevitability of the union of freedom and order would be the law of the collective life; it would be a freedom of the diverse play of the Infinite in divine souls, an order of the conscious unity of souls which is the law of the supramental Infinite. Our mental rendering of oneness brought about by the mental reason drives towards a thorough-going standardizatoin as its one effective means, - only minor shades of differentiation would be allowed to operate: but the greater richness of diversity in the self-expression of oneness would be the law of the gnostic life. In the gnostic consciousness difference would not lead to discord but to a spontaneous natural adaptation, a sense of complementary plenitude, a rich many-sided execution of the thing to be collectively known, done, worked out in life.

All mental standards would disappear because their necessity would cease; the authentic law of identity with the Divine Self would have replaced them.

On this fact that the Divine Knowledge and Force, the supreme Supernature, would act through the gnostic being with his full participation, is founded the freedom of the gnostic being; it is this unity that gives him his liberty. The freedom from law, including the moral law, so frequently affirmed of the spiritual being, is founded on this unity of its will with the will of the Eternal. All the mental standards would disappear because all necessity for them would cease; the higher authentic law of identity with the Divine Self and identity with all beings would have replaced them. There would be no question of selfishness or altruism, of oneself and others, since all are seen and felt as the one self and only what the supreme Truth and Good decided would be done.

There would be in the action a pervasive feeling of a self-existent universal love, sympathy, oneness, but the feeling would penetrate, colour and move in the act, not solely dominate or determine it: it would not stand for itself in opposition to the larger truth of things or dictate a personally impelled departure from the divinely willed true movement. This opposition and departure can happen in the Ignorance where love or any other strong principle of the nature can be divorced from wisdom even as it can be divorced from power; but in the supermind gnosis all powers are intimate to each other and act as one. In the gnostic person the Truth-Knowledge would lead and determine and all the other forces of the being concur in the action: there would be no place for disharmony or conflict between the powers of the nature.

The Divine Life Upon Earth

To be wholly and integrally conscious of oneself and of all the truth of one's being is what is implied by the perfect emergence of the indivudal conscoiusness, and it is that towards which evolution tends.

All being is one, and to be fully conscious means to be integrated with the consciousness of all, with the universal self and force and action.

For the essence of consciousness is the power to be aware of itself and its objects, and in its true nature this power must be direct, self-fulfilled and complete: if it is in us indirect, incomplete, unfulfilled in its workings, dependent on constructed instruments, it is because consciousness here is emerging from an original veiling Inconscience and is yet burdened and enveloped with the first Nescience proper to the Inconscient; but it must have the power to emerge completely, its destiny must be to evolve into its own perfection which is its true nature. Its true nature is to be wholly aware of its objects, and of these objects the first is self, the being which is evolving its consciousness here, and the rest is what we see as not-self, - but if existence is indivisible, that too must in reality be self: the destiny of evolving consciousness must be, then, to become perfect in its awareness, entirely aware of self and all-aware. This perfect and natural condition of consciousness is to us a superconscience, a state which is beyond us and in which

our mind, if suddenly transferred to it, could not at first function; but it is towards that superconscience that our conscious being must be evolving. But this evolution of our consciousness to a superconscience or a supreme of itself is possible only if the Inconscience which is our basis here is really itself an involved Superconscience; for what is to be in the becoming of the Reality in us must be already there involved or secret in its beginning. Such an involved Being or Power we can well conceive the Inconscient to be when we closely regard this material creation of an unconscious Energy and see it laboring out with curious construction and infinite device the work of a vast involved Intelligence and see, too, that we ourselves are something of that Intelligence evolving out of its involution, an emerging consciousness whose emergence cannot stop short on the way until the Involved has evolved and revealed itself as a supreme totally self-aware and all-aware Intelligence. It is this to which we have given the name of Supermind or Gnosis. For that evidently must be the consciousness of the Reality, the Being, the Spirit that is secret in us and slowly manifesting here; of that Being we are the becomings and must grow into its nature.

To be and to be fully is Nature's aim in us; but to be fully is to be wholly conscious of one's being: unconsciousness, half consciousness or deficient consciousness is a state of being not in possession of itself; it is existence, but not fullness of being. To be aware wholly and integrally of oneself and of all the truth of one's being is the necessary condition of true possession of existence. This self-awareness is what is meant by spiritual knowledge: the essence of spiritual knowledge is an intrinsic self-existent consciousness; all its action of knowledge, indeed all its action of any kind, must be that consciousness formulating itself. All other knowledge is consciousness oblivious of itself and striving to return to its own awareness of itself and its contents; it is self-ignorance labouring to transform itself back into self-knowledge.

To become complete in being, in consciousness of being, in force of being, in delight of being and to live in this integrated completeness is the divine living.

All being is one and to be fully is to be all that is. To be in the being of all and to include all in one's being, to be conscious

of the consciousness of all, to be integrated in force with the universal force, to carry all action and experience in oneself and feel it as one's own action and experience, to feel all selves as one's own self, to feel all delight of being as one's own delight of being is a necessary condition of the integral divine living.

The plenitude of this consciousness can only be attained by realizing the identity of the individual self with the transcendent Self, the supreme Reality.

But thus to be universally in the fullness and freedom of one's universality, one must be also transcendentally. The spiritual fullness of the being is eternity; if one has not the consciousness of timeless eternal being, if one is dependent on body or embodied mind or embodied life, or dependent on this world or that world or on this condition of being or that condition of being, that is not the reality of self, not the fullness of our spiritual existence. To live only as a self of body or be only by the body is to be an ephemeral creature, subject to death and desire and pain and suffering and decay and decadence. To transcend, to exceed consciousness of body, not to be held in the body or by the body, to hold the body only as an instrument, a minor outward formation of self, is a first condition of divine living. Not to be a mind subject to ignorance and restriction of consciousness, to transcend mind and handle it as an instrument, to control it as a surface formation of self, is a second condition. To be by the self and spirit, not to depend upon life, not to be identified with it, to transcend it and control and use it as an expression and instrumentation of the self, is a third condition.

[The individual] must enter into the surpeme divine Reality, feel his oneness with it, live in it, be its self-creation: all his mind, life, physicality must be converted into terms of its Supernature; all his thought, feelings, actions must be determined by it and be it, its self-formation. All this can become complete in him only when he has evolved out of the Ignorance into the Knowledge and through the Knowledge into the supreme Consciousness and its dynamis and supreme delight of existence; but some essentiality of these things and their sufficient instrumentation can come with the first spiritual change and culminate in the life of the gnostic supernature.

This realization demands a turning of the consciousness inward. The ordinary human consciousness is turned outward and sees the surface of things only. It recoils from entering the inner depths which appear dark and where it is afraid of losing itself. Yet the entry into this obscurity, this void, this silence is only the passage to a greater existence.

These things are impossible without an inward living; they cannot be reached by remaining in an external consciousness turned always outwards, active only or mainly on and from the surface. The individual being has to find himself, his true existence; he can only do this by going inward, by living within and from within . . . This movement of going inward and living inward is a difficult task to lay upon the normal consciousness of the human being; yet there is no other way of self-finding. The materialistic thinker, erecting an opposition between the extrovert and the introvert, holds up the extrovert attitude for acceptance as the only safety: to go inward is to enter into darkness or emptiness or to lose the balance of the consciousness and become morbid; it is from outside that such inner life as one can construct is created, and its health is assured only by a strict reliance on its wholesome and nourishing outer sources, - the balance of the personal mind and life can only be secured by a firm support on external reality, for the material world is the sole fundamental reality. This may be true for the physical man, the born extrovert, who feels himself to be a creature of outward Nature; made by her and dependent on her, he would lose himself if he went inward: for him there is no inner being, no inner living. But the introvert of this distinction also has not the inner life; he is not a seer of the true inner self and of inner things, but the small mental man who looks superficially inside himself and sees there not his spiritual self but his life-ego, his mind-ego and becomes unhealthily preoccupied with the movements of this little pitiful dwarf creature.

The idea or experience of an inner darkness when looking inwards is the first reaction of a mentality which has lived always on the surface and has no realized inner existence; it has only a constructed internal experience which depends on the outside world for the materials of its being. But to those into whose

composition there has entered the power of a more inner living, the movement of going within and living within brings not a darkness or dull emptiness but an enlargement, a rush of new experience, a greater vision, a larger capacity, an extended life infinitely more real and various than the first pettiness of the life constructed for itself by our normal physical humanity, a joy of being which is larger and richer than any delight in existence that the outer vital man or the surface mental man can gain by their dynamic vital force and activity or subtlety and expansion of the mental existence. A silence, an entry into a wide or even immense or infinite emptiness is part of the inner spiritual experience; of this silence and void the physical mind has a certain fear, the small superficially active thinking or vital mind a shrinking from it or dislike, - for it confuses the silence with mental and vital incapacity and the void with cessation or non-existence: but this silence is the silence of the spirit which is the condition of a greater knowledge, power and bliss, and this emptiness is the emptying of the cup of our natural being, a liberation of it from its turbid contents so that it may be filled with the wine of God; it is the passage not into non-existence but to a greater existence. Even when the being turns towards cessation, it is a cessation not in non-existence but into some vast ineffable of spiritual being or the plunge into the incommunicable superconscience of the Absolute.

Indeed, this inward-turning movement is not an imprisonment in the personal self; it is the first step towards a true universality.

In fact, this inward turning and movement is not an imprisionment in personal self, it is the first step towards a true universality; it brings to us the truth of our external as well as the truth of our internal existence. For this inner living can extend itself and embrace the universal life, it can contact, penetrate, englobe the life of all with a much greater reality and dynamic force than is in our surface consciousness at all possible. Our outmost universalization on the surface is a poor and limping endeavour, - it is a construction, a make-believe and not the real thing: for in our surface consciousness we are bound to separation of consciousness from others and wear the fetters of the ego. There our very selflessness becomes more often than not a subtle form of selfishness or turns into a larger affirmation of our ego; content

with our pose of altruism, we do not see that it is a veil for the imposition of our individual self, our ideas, our mental and vital personality, our need of ego-enlargement upon the others whom we take up into our expanded orbit. So far as we really succeed in living for others, it is done by an inner spiritual force of love and sympathy; but the power and field of effectuality of this force in us are small, the psychic movement that prompts it is incomplete, its action often ignorant because there is contact of mind and heart but our being does not embrace the being of others as ourselves. An external unity with others must always be an outward joining and association of external lives with a minor inner result; the mind and heart attach their movements to this common life and the beings whom we meet there; but the common external life remains the foundation, - the inward constructed unity, or so much of it as can persist in spite of mutual ignorance and discordant egoisms, conflict of minds, conflict of hearts, conflict of vital temperaments, conflict of interests, is a partial and insecure superstructure. The spiritual consciousness, the spiritual life reverses this principle of building; it bases its action in the collective life upon an inner experience and inclusion of others in our own being, an inner sense and reality of oneness. The spiritual individual acts out of that sense of oneness which gives him immediate and direct perception of the demand of self on other self, the need of the life, the good, the work of love and sympathy that can truly be done. A realization of spiritual unity, a dynamization of the intimate consciousness of one-being, of one self in all beings, can alone found and govern by its truth the action of the divine life.

The law of the divine life is universality in action, organized by an all-seeing Will, with the sense of the true oneness of all.

In the gnostic or divine being, in the gnostic life, there will be a close and complete consciousness of their mind, life, physical being which are felt as if they were one's own. The gnostic being will act, not out of a surface sentiment of love and sympathy or any similar feeling, but out of this close mutual consciousness, this intimate oneness. All his action in the world will be enlightened by a truth of vision of what has to be done, a sense of the will of the Divine Reality in him which is also the Divine Reality in others and it will be done for the Divine in others and the Divine

in all, for the effectuation of the truth of purpose of the All as seen in the light of the highest Consciousness and in the way and by the steps through which it must be effectuated in the power of the Supernature. The gnostic being finds himself not only in his own fulfilment, which is the fulfilment of the Divine Being and Will in him, but in the fulfilment of others; his universal individuality effectuates itself in the movement of the All in all beings towards its greater becoming. He sees a divine working everywhere; what goes out from him into the sum of that divine working, from the inner Light, Will, Force that works in him, is his action. There is no separative ego in him to initiate anything; it is the Transcendent and Universal that moves out through his universalized individuality into the action of the universe. As he does not live for a separate ego, so too he does not live for the purpose of any collective ego; he lives in and for the Divine in himself, in and for the Divine in the collectivity, in and for the Divine in all beings. This universality in action, organized by the all-seeing Will in the sense of the realized oneness of all, is the law of his divine living.

It is, then, this spiritual fulfilment of the urge to individual perfection and an inner completeness of being that we mean first when we speak of a divine life. It is the first essential condition of a perfected life on earth and we are therefore right in making the utmost possible individual perfection our first supreme business. The perfection of the spiritual and pragmatic relation of the individual with all around him is our second preoccupation; the solution of this second desideratum lies in a complete universality and oneness with all life upon earth which is the other concomitant result of an evolution into the gnostic consciousness and nature. But there still remains the third desideratum, a new world, a change in the total life of humanity or, at the least, a new perfected collective life in the earth-nature. This calls for the appearance not only of isolated evolved individuals acting in the unevolved mass, but of many gnostic individuals forming a new kind of beings and a new common life superior to the present indvidual and common existence.

A spiritual or gnostic being would feel his harmony with the whole gnostic life around him, whatever his position in the whole.

According to his place in it he would know how to lead or to rule, but also how to subordinate himself; both would be to him an equal delight: for the spirit's freedom, because it is eternal, self-existent and inalienable, can be felt as much in service and willing subordination and adjustment with other selves as in power and rule. An inner spiritual freedom can accept its place in the truth of an inner spiritual hierarchy as well as in the truth, not incompatible with it, of a fundamental spiritual equality. It is this self-arrangement of Truth, a natural order of the spirit, that would exist in a common life of different degrees and stages of the evolving gnostic being. Unity is the basis of the gnostic consciousness, mutuality the natural result of its direct awareness of oneness in diversity, harmony the inevitable power of the working of its force. Unity, mutuality and harmony must therefore be the inescapable law of a common or collective gnostic life. What forms it might take would depend upon the will of evolutionary manifestation of the Supernature, but this would be its general character and principle.

New powers of consciousness and new faculties will develop in the gnostic being who will use them in a natural, normal and spontaneous way both for knowledge and for action.

An evolution of innate and latent but as yet unevolved powers of consciousness is not considered admissable by the modern mind, because these exceed our present formulation of Nature and, to our ignorant preconceptions founded on a limited experience, they seem to belong to the supernatural, to the miraculous and occult; for they surpass the known action of material Energy which is now ordinarily accepted as the sole cause and mode of things and the sole instrumentation of the World-Force. A human working of marvels, by the conscious being discovering and developing an instrumentation of material forces overpassing anything that Nature or man has yet organized is not admitted as possible. But there would be nothing supernatural or miraculous in such an evolution, except in so far as it would be a supernature or superior nature to ours just as human nature is a supernature or superior nature to that of animal or plant or material objects. Our mind and its powers, our use of reason, our mental intuition and insight, speech, possibilities of

philosophical, scientific, aesthetic discovery of the truths and potencies of being and a control of its forces are an evolution that has taken place: yet it would seem impossible if we took our stand on the limited animal consciousness and its capacities; for there is nothing there to warrant so prodigious a progression. But still there are vague initial manifestations, rudimentary elements or arrested possibilities in the animal to which our reason and intelligence with their extraordinary developments stand as an unimaginable journey from a poor and unpromising point of departure. The rudiments of spiritual powers belonging to the gnostic supernature are similarly there even in our ordinary composition, but only occasionally and sparsely active. It is not irrational to suppose that at this much higher stage of the evolution a similar but greater progression starting from these rudimentary beginnings might lead to another immense development and departure.

In mystic experience, - when there is an opening of the inner centres, or in other ways, spontaneously or by will or endeavour or in the very course of the spiritual growth, - new powers of consciousness ahve been known to develop; they present themselves as if an automatic consequence of some inner opening or in answer to a call in the being, so much so that it has been found necessary to recommend to the seeker not to hunt after these powers, not to accept or use them. This rejection is logical for those who seek to withdraw from life; for all acceptance of greater power would bind to life or be a burden on the bare and pure urge towards liberation. An indifference to all other aims and issues is natural for the God-lover who seeks God for His own sake and not for power or any other inferior attraction; the pursuit of these alluring but often dangerous forces would be a deviation from his purpose. A similar rejection is a necessary self-restraint and a spiritual discipline for the immature seeker, since such powers may be a great, even a deadly peril; for their supernomality may easily feed in him an abnormal exaggeration of the ego. Power in itself may be dreaded as a temptation by the aspirant to perfection, because power can abase as well as elevate; nothing is more liable to misuse. But when new capacities come as an inevitable result of the growth into a greater consciousness and

a greater life and that growth is part of the very aim of the spiritual being within us, this bar does not operate; for a growth of the being into supernature and its life in supernature cannot take place or cannot be complete without bringing with it a greater power of consciousness and a greater power of life and the spontaneous development of an instrumentation of knowledge and force normal to that supernature. There is nothing in this future evolution of the being which could be regarded as irrational or incredible; there is nothing in it abnormal or miraculous: it would be the necessary course of the evolution of consciousness and its forces in the passage from the mental to the gnostic or supramental formulation of our existence. This action of the forces of supernature would be a natural, normal and spontaneously simple working of the new higher or greater consciousness into which the being enters in the course of his self-evolution; the gnostic being accepting the gnostic life would develop and use the powers of this greater consciousness, even as man develops and uses the powers of his mental nature.

The life of gnostic beings might fitly be characterized as a superhuman or divine life.

But it must not be confused with past and present ideas of supermanhood.

A gnostic Supernature transcends all the values of our normal ignorant Nature; our standards and values are created by ignorance and therefore cannot determine the life of Supernature. At the same time our present nature is a derivation from Supernature and is not a pure ignorance but a half-knowledge; it is therefore reasonable to suppose that whatever spiritual truth there is in or behind its standards and values will reappear in the higher life, not as standards, but as elements transformed, uplifted out of the ignorance and raised into the true harmony of a more luminous existence. As the universalized spiritual individual sheds the limited personality, the ego, as he rises beyond mind to a completer knowledge in Supernature, the conflicting ideals of the mind must fall away from him, but what is true behind them will remain in the life of Supernature. The gnostic consciousness is a consciousness in which all contradictions are cancelled or fused into each other which all contradictions are cancelled or fused into each other in

a higher light of seeing and being, in a unified self-knowledge and world-knowledge. The gnostic being will not accept the mind's ideals and standards; he will not be moved to live for himself, for his ego, or for humanity or for others or for the community or for the State; for he will be aware of something greater than these half-truths, of the Divine Reality, and it is for that he will live, for its will in himself and in all, in a spirit of large universality, in the light of the will of the Transcendence. For the same reason there can be no conflict between self-affirmation and altruism in the gnostic life, for the self of the gnostic being is one with the self of all,--no conflict between the ideal of individualism and the collective ideal, for both are terms of a greater Reality and only in so far as either expresses the Reality or their fulfilment serves the will of the Reality, can they have a value for his spirit. But at the same time what is true in the mental ideals and dimly figured in them will be fulfilled in his existence; for while his consciousness exceeds the human values so that he cannot substitue mankind or the community or the State or others or himself for God, the affirmation of the Divine in himself and a sense of the Divine in others and the sense of oneness with humanity, with all other beings, with all the world because of the Divine in them and a lead towards a greater and better affirmation of the growing Reality in them will be part of his life action. But what he shall do will be decided by the Truth of the Knowledge and Will in him, a total an infinite Truth that is not bound by any single mental law or standard but acts with freedom in the whole reality, with respect for each truth in its place and with a clear knowledge of the forces at work and the intention in the manifesting Divine Nisus at each step of cosmic evolution and in each event and circumstance.

The one rule of the gnostic life would be the self-expression of the Spirit, the will of the Divine Being; that will, that self-expression could manifest through extreme simplicity or through extreme complexity and opulence or in their natural balance, - for beauty and plenitude, a hidden sweetness and laughter in things, a sunshine and gladness of life are also powers and expressions of the Spirit. In all directions the Spirit within determining the law of the nature would determine the frame of the life and its detail and circumstance. In all there would be the same plastic principle; a rigid standardization, however necessary for the mind's arrangement of things, could not be the law of the spiritual life. A great diversity and liberty of self-expression based on an underlying unity might well become manifest; but everywhere there would be harmony and truth of order.

A life of gnostic beings carrying the evolution to a higher supramental status might fitly be characterized as a divine life; for it would be a life in the Divine, a life of the beginnings of a spiritual divine light and power and joy manifested in material Nature. That might be described, since it surpasses the mental human level, as a life of spiritual and supramental supermanhood. But this must not be confused with past and present ideas of supermanhood; for supermanhood in the mental idea consists of an overtopping of the normal human level, not in kind but in degree of the same kind, by an enlarged personality, a magnified and exaggerated ego, an increased power of mind, an increased power of vital force, a refined or dense and massive exaggeration of the forces of the human Ignorance; it carries also, commonly implied in it, the idea of a forceful domination over humanity by a superman. That would mean a supermanhood of the Nietzschean type; it might be at its worst the reign of the 'blonde beast' or the dark beast or of any and every beast, a return to barbaric strength and ruthlessness and force: but this would be no evolution, it would be a reversion to an old strenuous barbarism.

But earth has had enough of this kind in her past and its repetition can only prolong the old lines; she can get no true profit for her future, no power of self-exceeding, from the Titan, the Asura: even a great or supernormal power in it could only carry her on larger circles of her old orbit. But what has to emerge is something much more difficult and much more simple; it is a self-realized being, a building of the spiritual self, an intensity and urge of the soul and the deliverance and sovereignty of its light and power and beauty,--not an egoistic supermanhood seizing on a mental and vital domination over humanity, but the sovereignty of the Spirit over its own instruments, its possession of itself and its possession of life in the power of the spirit, a new consciousness in which humanity itself shall find its own self-exceeding and self-fulfilment by the revelation of the divinity that is striving for birth

within it. This is the sole true supermanhood and the one real possibility of a step forward in evolutionary Nature.

It would be a misconception to think that a life in the full light of Knowledge would lose its charm and become an insipid monotony. The gnostic manifestation of life would be more full and fruitful and its interest more vivid than the creative interest offered to us by the world of Ignorance.

This new status would indeed be a reversal of the present law of human consciousness and life, for it would reverse the whole principle of the life of the Ignorance. It is for the taste of the Ignorance, its suprise and adventure, one might say, that the soul has descended into the Inconscience and assumed the diguise of Matter, for the adventure and the joy of creation and discovery, an adventure of the spirit, an adventure of the mind and life and the hazardous surprises of their working in Matter, for the disovery and conquest of the new and the unknown; all this constitutes the enterprise of life and all this, it might seem, would cease with the cessation of the Ignorance. Man's life is made up of the light and the darkness, the gains and losses, the difficulties and dangers, the pleasures and pains of the Ignorance, a play of colours moving on a soil of the general neutrality of Matter which has as its basis the nescience and insensibility of the Inconscient. To the normal life-being an existence without the reactions of success and frustration, vital joy and grief, peril and passion, pleasure and pain, the vicissitudes and uncertainties of fate and struggle and battle and endeavour, a joy of novelty and suprise and creation projecting itself into the unknown, might seem to be void of variety and therefore void of vital savour. Any life surpassing these things tends to appear to it as something featureless and empty or cast in the figure of an immutable sameness; the human mind's picture of heaven is the incessant repetition of an eternal monotone. But this is a misconception; for an entry into the gnostic consciousness would be an entry into the Infinite. It would be a self-creation bringing out the Infinite infinitely into form of being, and the interest of the Infinite is much greater and multitudinous as well as more imperishably delightful than the interest of the finite. The evolution in the Knowledge would be a more beautiful and glorious manifestation with more vistas ever unfolding

themselves and more intensive in all ways than any evolution could be in the Ignorance. The delight of the Spirit is ever new, the forms of beauty it takes innumerable, its godhead ever young and the taste of delight, rasa,29 of the Infinite eternal and inexhaustible. The gnostic manifestation of life would be more full and fruitful and its interest more vivid than the creative interest of the Ignorance; it would be a greater and happier constant miracle.

If there is an evolution in material Nature and if it is an evolution of being with consciousness and life as its two key-terms and powers, this fullness of being, fullness of consciousness, fullness of life must be the goal of development towards which we are tending and which will manifest at an early or later stage of our destiny. The self, the spirit, the reality that is disclosing itself out of the first inconscience of life and matter, would evolve its complete truth of being and consciousness in that life and matter. It would return to itself--or, if its end as an individual is to return into its Absolute, it could make that return also,--not through a frustration of life but through a spiritual completeness of itself in life. Our evolution in the Ignorance with its chequered joy and pain of self-discovery and world-discovery, its half-fulfilments, its constant finding and missing, is only our first state. It must lead inevitably towards an evolution in the Knowledge, a self-finding and self-unfolding of the Spirit, a self-revelation of the Divinity in things in that true power of itself in Nature which is to us still a Supernature.

SRI AUROBINDO OR THE ADVENTURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

From the Preface

Hypnotized as we are by the "inescapable" scientific conditions of the present world, we have come to believe that our hope lies in an ever greater proliferation of machines, which will see better than we do, hear better than we do, calculate better than we do, heal better than we do--and finally, perhaps, live better than we do. "The age of adventures is over. Even if we reach the seventh galaxy, we will go there helmeted and mechanized, and it will not change a thing for us; we will find ourselves exactly as we are now: helpless children in the face of death, living beings who

are not too sure how they live, why they are alive, or where they are going. On the earth, as we know, the times of Cortez and Pizarro are over; one and the same pervasive Mechanism stifles us: the trap is closing inexorably. But, as always, it turns out that our bleakest adversities are also our most promising opportunities, and that the dark passage is only a passage leading to a greater light. Hence, with our backs against the wall, we are facing the last territory left for us to explore, the ultimate adventure: ourselves.

Indeed, there are plenty of simple and obvious signs. This decade's [the 60's] most important phenomenon is not the trip to the moon, but the "trips" on drugs, the student restlessness throughout the world, and the great hippie migration. But where could they possibly go? There is no more room on the teeming beaches, no more room on the crowded roads, no more room in the ever-expanding anthills of our cities. We have to find a way out elsewhere. But there are many kinds of "elsewheres." Those of drugs are uncertain and fraught with danger, and above all they depend upon an outer agent; an experience ought to be possible at will, anywhere, at the grocery store as well as in the solitude of one's room--otherwise it is not an experience but an anomaly or an enslavement. Those of psychoanalysis are limited, for the moment, to the dimly lit caves of the "unconscious," and most importantly, they lack the agency of consciousness, through which a person can be in full control, instead of being an impotent witness or a sickly patient.

Those of religion may be more enlightened, but they too depend upon a god or a dogma; for the most part they confine us in one type of experience, for it is just as possible to be a prisoner of other worlds as it is of this one--in fact, even more so. Finally, the value of an experience is measured by its capacity to transform life; otherwise, it is simply an empty dream or an hallucination. Sri Aurobindo leads us to a twofold discovery, which we so urgently need if we want to find an intelligible meaning to the suffocating chaos we live in, as well as a key for transforming our world. By following him step by step in his prodigious exploration, we are led to the most important discovery of all times, to the threshold of the Great Secret that is to change the face of this world, namely, that consciousness is power.

Hypnotized as we are by the "inescapable" scientific conditions of the present world, we have come to believe that our hope lies in an ever greater proliferation of machines, which will see better than we do, hear better than we do, calculate better than we do, heal better than we do--and finally, perhaps, live better than we do. Indeed, we must first realize that we can do better than our machines, and that the enormous Mechanism that is suffocating us is liable to collapse as quickly as it came into being, provided we are willing to seize on the true power and go down into our own hearts, as methodical, rigorous, and clearheaded explorers. "I become what I see in myself. All that thought suggests to me, I can do; all that thought reveals in me, I can become. This should be man's unshakable faith in himself, because God dwells in him." Then we may discover that our splendid twentieth century is still the Stone Age of psychology, that, in spite of all our science, we have not yet entered the true science of living, the real mastery of the world and of ourselves, and that there lie before us horizons of perfection, harmony and beauty, compared to which our most superb scientific discoveries are like the roughcasts of an apprentice. "I become what I see in myself. All that thought suggests to me, I can do; all that thought reveals in me, I can become. This should be man's unshakable faith in himself, because God dwells in him."

From the Introduction...

There once was a wicked Maharaja who could not bear to think that anyone was superior to him. So he summoned all the pandits of the realm, as was the practice on momentous occasions, and put to them this question: "Which of us two is greater, I or God?" The pandits began to tremble with fear. Being wise by profession, they asked for time; they were also concerned for their positions and their lives. Yet, they were worthy men who did not want to displease God. As they were lamenting their predicament, the oldest pandit reassured them: "Leave it to me. Tomorrow I shall speak to the Prince."

The next day, the whole court was gathered in a solemn durbar when the old pandit quietly arrived, his hands humbly joined together, his forehead smeared with white ashes. He bowed low and spoke these words: "O Lord, undoubtedly thou art the

greater." The Prince twirled his long moustache thrice and tossed his head high. "Thou art the greater, King, for thou canst banish us from thy kingdom, whilst God cannot; for verily, all is His kingdom and there is nowhere to go outside Him."

This Indian tale, which comes from Bengal, where Sri Aurobindo was born, was not unknown to him who said that all is He--gods, devils, men, the earth, not just heaven--and whose entire experience leads to a divine rehabilitation of matter.

For the last half century, psychology has done nothing but reinstate the demons in man; it is possible, as André Malraux believed, that the task of the next half century will be "to reinstate the gods in man," or, rather, as Sri Aurobindo put it, to reinstate the Spirit in man and in matter, and to create "the life divine on earth": The heavens beyond are great and wonderful, but greater yet and more wonderful are the heavens within you. It is these Edens that await the divine worker.

There are many ways to set out to work; each of us has, in fact, his or her own particular approach: for one it may be a well-crafted object or a job well done; for another a beautiful idea, an encompassing philosophical system; for still another a piece of music, the flowing of a river, a burst of sunlight on the sea; all are ways of breathing the Infinite. But these are brief moments, and we seek permanence. These are moments subject to many uncontrollable conditions, and we seek something inalienable, independent of conditions and circumstances--a window within us that will never close again. And since those conditions are difficult to meet here on earth, we speak of "God," of "spirituality," of Christ, of Buddha, and the whole lineage of great religious founders; all are ways of finding permanence. But it may be that we are not religious or spiritual men, but just men, tired of dogmas, who believe in the earth and who are suspicious of big words. We also may be somewhat weary of too much intelligent thinking; all we want is our own little river flowing into the Infinite.

There was a great saint in India who, for many years before he found peace, used to ask whomever he met: "Have you seen God? Have you seen God?" He would always go away frustrated and angry because people told him stories. He wanted to see. He wasn't wrong, considering all the deception men have heaped onto this world, as onto many others. Once we have seen, we can talk about it; or, most probably, we will remain silent. Indeed, we do not want to deceive ourselves with words; we want to start from what we have, right where we are, with our cloddy shoes and the little ray of sunshine on the good days; such is our simple hearted faith. We see that the world around us is not so great, and we aspire for it to change, but we have become wary of universal panaceas, of movements, parties, and theories. So we will begin at square one, with ourselves such as we are; it isn't much, but it's all we have. We will try to change this little bit of world before setting out to save the other. And perhaps this isn't such a foolish idea after all; for who knows whether changing the one is not the most effective way of changing the other?

The Last of the Intellect

"The capital period of my intellectual development," confided Sri Aurobindo to a disciple, "was when I could see clearly that what the intellect said might be correct and not correct, that what the intellect justified was true and its opposite also was true. I never admitted a truth in the mind without simultaneously keeping it open to the contrary of it.... And the first result was that the prestige of the intellect was gone!" It had taken Sri Aurobindo fourteen years to cover the road of the West; it was to take him almost as much time to cover the path of India and to attain the "summit" of the traditional yogic realisations, that is, the starting point of his own work. But what is interesting for us is that even this traditional road, which we must look upon as a preparation, Sri Aurobindo traversed outside all customary rules, as a freelance or rather as an explorer who cares little for precautions and for maps and thus avoids many useless windings because he has simply the courage to go straight ahead.

It was then not in solitude nor with legs crossed nor under the guidance of an enlightened Master that Sri Aurobindo was to begin the journey but as we might do ourselves, without knowing anything about it, right in the midst of life - a life as tumultuous and disturbed as ours may be - and all alone.

The first secret of Sri Aurobindo is undoubtedly to have always refused to cut life into two - action, meditation, inner, outer, and

all the gamut of our false separations; from the day he thought of yoga he put everything into it: high and low, within, without, all was good enough for him, and he started off without a look behind. Sri Aurobindo has not come to give us a demonstration of exceptional qualities in an exceptional milieu, he has come to show us what is possible for man and that the exceptional is only a normality not yet mastered, even as the supernatural, he said, is that the nature of which we have not attained or do not yet know, or the means of which we have not yet conquered.' Fundamentally, everything in this world is a question of right concentration; there is nothing which will not finally yield up to a well-directed concentration.

When he landed at the Apollo Bunder in Bombay a spontaneous spiritual experience seized him, a vast calm took possession of him; but he had other problems: food, living. Sri Aurobindo was twenty. He found a job with the Maharaja of Baroda as professor first of French, then of English, at the State College of which he soon became VicePrincipal.

He also worked as the private secretary of the Prince. Between the Court and the College his hands were already full, but it was the destiny of India which preoccupied him. He went several times to Calcutta, acquainted himself with the political situation, wrote articles which created a sensation, for he was not satisfied with calling the queen-empress of India an old lady so called by way of courtesy he invited his compatriots to shake off the British yoke and attacked the mendicant policy of the Indian Congress: no reforms, no collaboration. His aim was to organise all the energies of the nation for a revolutionary action. This must have required some courage in 1893 when the British hegemony extended over three-fourths of the globe.

But Sri Aurobindo had a special way of attacking the problem; he did not lay the blame upon the English but upon the Indians themselves: Our actual enemy is not any force exterior to ourselves, but our own crying weaknesses, our cowardice, our purblind sentimentalism.$ Here is already a dominant note of Sri Aurobindo who, in the political battle as in the spiritual and in all circumstances, asks us to search within ourselves and not outside or elsewhere for the causes of our misfortunes and of the calamities

of the world; outer circumstances are merely the unfolding of what we are, said later she who shared his work.Sri Aurobindo soon realised that newspaper articles did not suffice to awaken a country; he began underground work which was to lead him to the threshold of the gallows. For thirteen years Sri Aurobindo was to play with fire. However, this young man was neither agitated nor fanatical: "His smile was simple like that of a child, as limpid and as sweet," wrote his Bengali teacher who lived with him for two years (Sri Aurobindo had naturally begun to study his mother-tongue), and with a touching naivety his teacher adds:

"Before meeting Sri Aurobindo I had imagined him as a stalwart figure dressed like a European from head to foot, immaculate, with a stern look behind his spectacles, a distorted accent (of Cambridge, evidently!) and a temper exceedingly rough.... Who could have thought that this bronzed young man with the soft and dreamy eyes and long wavy hair parted in the middle and falling to the neck, clad in a common coarse Ahmedabad dhoti and a close-fitting Indian jacket, on his feet old-fashioned slippers with upturned toes, and the face slightly marked with small-pox, was no other than Mister Aurobindo Ghose, a living well of French, Latin and Greek?"

For the rest, Sri Aurobindo was not yet through with books, the occidental momentum was still there; by huge cases he devoured books ordered from Bombay and Calcutta: "Aurobindo would sit at his work-table," continues his Bengali teacher, "and read in the light of an oil lamp till one in the morning, oblivious of the intolerable mosquito-bites. I would see him seated there in the same posture, for hours on end, his eyes fixed on the book, like a yogi plunged in the contemplation of the Divine, lost to all that went on around. Even if the house had caught fire, it would not have broken this concentration."

Novels, English, Russian, German, French, filed past him thus and also in ever larger numbers the sacred books of India, the Upanishads, the Gita, the Ramayana, without his having ever stepped into a temple save through curiosity. "Once having returned from College," narrates one of his friends, "Sri Aurobindo sat down, picked up a book at random and began to read it whilst Z and some friends began a noisy game of chess. After half an

hour he put down his book and took a cup of tea. We had already seen him do this many a time and were waiting eagerly for a chance to verify whether he read the books from cover to cover or whether he only skimmed through a few pages here and there.

The test began immediately. Z opened the book, read a line aloud and asked Sri Aurobindo to repeat the sequel. Sri Aurobindo concentrated for a moment and repeated the entire page without a single mistake. If he could read a hundred pages in half an hour, no wonder he could read a caseful of books in so incredibly short a time." But Sri Aurobindo did not stop at the translations of the sacred texts, he began to study Sanskrit which he learnt by himself-a fact typical of him: indeed a thing had but to be considered difficult or impossible, and he refused to take anyone's word for it, be he grammarian, pandit or clergyman, and wished to make the experiment himself, directly. This method possibly had advantages, for not only did he learn Sanskrit but discovered a few years later the lost meaning of the Vedas (The Vedic Age, prior to that of the Upanishads, which was its heir, may be placed before 4000 B.C)

The day came, however, when Sri Aurobindo had had enough of these intellectual gymnastics. Probably he had seen that one can continue indefinitely to amass knowledge and to read and read and to learn the languages, even all the languages in the world and all the books in the world, and yet not advance an inch.

For the mind does not seek to know truly, though it seems to - it seeks to grind. Its need of knowledge is primarily a need of something to grind. And if perchance the machine were to come to a stop because the knowledge was found, it would quickly rise in revolt and find something new to grind, to have the pleasure of grinding and grinding: This is its function. That within us which seeks to know and to progress is not the mind but something behind it which makes use of it:

"The capital period of my intellectual development," confided Sri Aurobindo to a disciple, "was when I could see clearly that what the intellect said might be correct and not correct, that what the intellect justified was true and its opposite also was true. I never admitted a truth in the mind without simultaneously keeping it open to the contrary of it.... And the first result was that the prestige of the intellect was gone!" Sri Aurobindo had come to a turning-point; the temples did not interest him and the books were empty. A friend advised him to practise yoga, Sri Aurobindo refused: A yoga which requires me to give up the world is not for me; he even added, a solitary salvation leaving the world to its fate was felt as almost distasteful.

But one day Sri Aurobindo witnessed a curious scene, though one quite common in India; yet banality is often the best pretext for an inner starting-point. His brother Barin had fallen ill having caught a dangerous hill-fever (Barin was born when Sri Aurobindo was in England; it was he who served as Sri Aurobindo's secret messenger for the organisation of the Indian resistance in Bengal), when there arrived one of those half-naked wandering monks, smeared with ashes, who are called naga-sannyasins. He was perhaps on his way begging food from door to door as is their custom, when he saw Barin rolled up in his bed-sheets, shivering with fever. Without a word he asked for a glass of water, cut it through cross-wise with a knife while he chanted a mantra, and gave it to the sick man to drink. Five minutes later Barin was cured and the monk had disappeared.

Sri Aurobindo had heard much about the strange powers of these ascetics but this time he had seen with his own eyes. He felt then that yoga could serve other ends than mere escape. Now, he had need of power to liberate India: "The agnostic was in me, the atheist was in me, the sceptic was in me and I was not absolutely sure that there was a God at all.... I felt there must be a mighty truth somewhere in this yoga.... So when I turned to the yoga and resolved to practise it and find out if my idea was right, I did it in this spirit and with this prayer to Him, "If Thou art, then Thou knowest my heart. Thou knowest that I do not ask for Mukti (liberation), I do not ask for anything which others ask for. I ask only for strength to uplift this nation, I ask only to be allowed to live and work for this people whom I love.."

It was thus that Sri Aurobindo set out.

4

The Relevance of Aurobindo: Early Political Life and Teachings

SRI AUROBINDO ON THE PASSING OF WAR

The progress of humanity proceeds by a series of imaginations which the Will in the race turns into accomplished facts and a train of illusions which contain each of them an inevitable truth. The truth is there in the secret Will and Knowledge that are conducting our affairs for us and it reflects itself in the soul of mankind; the illusion is in the shape we give to that reflection, the veil of arbitrary fixations of time, place and circumstance which that deceptive organ of knowledge, the human intellect, weaves over the face of the Truth.

Human imaginations are often fulfilled to the letter; our illusions on the contrary find the truth behind them realised most unexpectedly, at a time, in ways, under circumstances far other than those we had fixed for them.

Man's illusions are of all sorts and kinds, some of them petty though not unimportant, for nothing in the world is unimportant, others vast and grandiose. The greatest of them all are those which cluster round the hope of a perfected society, a perfected race, a terrestrial millennium. Each new idea, religious or social, which takes possession of the epoch and seizes on large masses of men, is in turn to be the instrument of these high realisations; each in turn betrays the hope which gave it its force to conquer.

And the reason is plain enough to whosoever chooses to see; it is that no change of ideas or of the intellectual outlook upon

life, no belief in God or Avatar or Prophet, no victorious science or liberating philosophy, no social scheme or system, no sort of machinery internal or external can really bring about the great desire implanted in the race, true though that desire is in itself and the index of the goal to which we are being led.

Because man is himself not a machine nor a device, but a being and a most complex one at that, therefore he cannot be saved by machinery; only by an entire change which shall affect all the members of his being, can he be liberated from his discords and imperfections. One of the illusions incidental to this great hope is the expectation of the passing of war. This grand event in human progress is always being confidently expected, and since we are now all scientific minds and rational beings, we no longer expect it by a divine intervention, but assign sound physical and economical reasons for the faith that is in us.

The first form taken by this new gospel was the expectation and the prophecy that the extension of commerce would be the extinction of war. Commercialism was the natural enemy of militarism and would drive it from the face of the earth. The growing and universal lust of gold and the habit of comfort and the necessities of increased production and intricate interchange would crush out the lust of power and dominion and glory and battle. Gold-hunger or commodity-hunger would drive out earthhunger, the dharma of the Vaishya would set its foot on the dharma of the Kshatriya and give it its painless quietus.

The ironic reply of the gods has not been long in coming. Actually this very reign of commercialism, this increase of production and interchange, this desire for commodities and markets and this piling up of a huge burden of unnecessary necessities has been the cause of half the wars that have since afflicted the human race. And now we see militarism and commercialism united in a loving clasp, coalescing into a sacred biune duality of national life and patriotic aspiration and causing and driving by their force the most irrational, the most monstrous and nearly cataclysmic, the hugest war of modern and indeed of all historic times.

Another illusion was that the growth of democracy would mean the growth of pacifism and the end of war. It was fondly

thought that wars are in their nature dynastic and aristocratic; greedy kings and martial nobles driven by earth-hunger and battle-hunger, diplomatists playing at chess with the lives of men and the fortunes of nations, these were the guilty causes of war who drove the unfortunate peoples to the battlefield like sheep to the shambles.

These proletariates, mere food for powder, who had no interest, no desire, no battle-hunger driving them to armed conflict, had only to become instructed and dominant to embrace each other and all the world in a free and fraternal amity.

Man refuses to learn from that history of whose lessons the wise prate to us; otherwise the story of old democracies ought to have been enough to prevent this particular illusion.

In any case the answer of the gods has been, here too, sufficiently ironic. If kings and diplomatists are still often the movers of war, none more ready than the modern democracy to make itself their enthusiastic and noisy accomplice, and we see even the modern spectacle of governments and diplomats hanging back in affright or doubt from the yawning clamorous abyss while angry shouting peoples impel them to the verge.

Bewildered pacifists who still cling to their principles and illusions, find themselves howled down by the people and, what is piquant enough, by their own recent comrades and leaders. The socialist, the syndicalist, the internationalist of yesterday stands forward as a banner-bearer in the great mutual massacre and his voice is the loudest to cheer on the dogs of war.

Another recent illusion was the power of Courts of Arbitration and Concerts of Europe to prevent war. There again the course that events immediately took was sufficiently ironic; for the institution of the great Court of International Arbitration was followed up by a series of little and great wars which led by an inexorable logical chain to the long-dreaded European conflict, and the monarch who had first conceived the idea, was also the first to unsheath his sword in a conflict dictated on both sides by the most unrighteous greed and aggression.

In fact this series of wars, whether fought in Northern or Southern Africa, in Manchuria or the Balkans, was marked most

prominently by the spirit which disregards cynically that very idea of inherent and existing rights, that balance of law and equity upon which alone arbitration can be founded.

As for the Concert of Europe, it seems far enough from us now, almost antediluvian in its antiquity, as it belongs indeed to the age before the deluge; but we can remember well enough what an unmusical and discordant concert it was, what a series of fumblings and blunderings and how its diplomacy led us fatally to the inevitable event against which it struggled.

Now it is suggested by many to substitute a United States of Europe for the defunct Concert and for the poor helpless Hague tribunal an effective Court of International Law with force behind it to impose its decisions.

But so long as men go on believing in the sovereign power of machinery, it is not likely that the gods either will cease from their studied irony.

There have been other speculations and reasonings; ingenious minds have searched for a firmer and more rational ground of faith. The first of these was propounded in a book by a Russian writer which had an enormous success in its day but has now passed into the silence.

Science was to bring war to an end by making it physically impossible. It was mathematically proved that with modern weapons two equal armies would fight each other to a standstill, attack would become impossible except by numbers thrice those of the defence and war therefore would bring no military decision but only an infructuous upheaval and disturbance of the organised life of the nations.

When the Russo-Japanese war almost immediately proved that attack and victory were still possible and the battlefury of man superior to the fury of his death-dealing engines, another book was published called by a title which has turned into a jest upon the writer, the "Great Illusion", to prove that the idea of a commercial advantage to be gained by war and conquest was an illusion and that as soon as this was understood and the sole benefit of peaceful interchange realised, the peoples would abandon a method of settlement now chiefly undertaken from

motives of commercial expansion, yet whose disastrous result was only to disorganise fatally the commercial prosperity it sought to serve.

The present war came as the immediate answer of the gods to this sober and rational proposition. It has been fought for conquest and commercial expansion and it is proposed, even when it has been fought out on the field, to follow it up by a commercial struggle between the belligerent nations.

The men who wrote these books were capable thinkers, but they ignored the one thing that matters, human nature.

The present war has justified to a certain extent the Russian writer, though by developments he did not foresee; scientific warfare has brought military movement to a standstill and baffled the strategist and the tactician, it has rendered decisive victory impossible except by overwhelming numbers or an overwhelming weight of artillery. But this has not made war impossible, it has only changed its character; it has at the most replaced the war of military decisions by that of military and financial exhaustion aided by the grim weapon of famine.

The English writer on the other hand erred by isolating the economic motive as the one factor that weighed; he ignored the human lust of dominion which, carried into the terms of commercialism means the undisputed control of markets and the exploitation of helpless populations.

Again, when we rely upon the disturbance of organised national and international life as a preventive of war, we forget the boundless power of self-adaptation which man possesses; that power has been shown strikingly enough in the skill and ease with which the organisation and finance of peace were replaced in the present crisis by the organisation and finance of war.

And when we rely upon Science to make war impossible, we forget that the progress of Science means a series of surprises and that it means also a constant effort of human ingenuity to overcome impossibilities and find fresh means of satisfying our ideas, desires and instincts. Science may well make war of the present type with shot and shell and mines and battleships an impossibility and yet develop and put in their place simpler or more summary means

which may bring back an easier organisation of warfare. So long as war does not become psychologically impossible, it will remain or, if banished for a while, return.

War itself, it is hoped, will end war; the expense, the horror, the butchery, the disturbance of tranquil life, the whole confused sanguinary madness of the thing has reached or will reach such colossal proportions that the human race will fling the monstrosity behind it in weariness and disgust.

But weariness and disgust, horror and pity, even the opening of the eyes to reason by the practical facts of the waste of human life and energy and the harm and extravagance are not permanent factors; they last only while the lesson is fresh.

Afterwards, there is forgetfulness; human nature recuperates itself and recovers the instincts that were temporarily dominated. A long peace, even a certain organisation of peace, may conceivably result, but so long as the heart of man remains what it is, the peace will come to an end; the organisation will break down under the stress of human passions.

War is no longer, perhaps, a biological necessity, but it is still a psychological necessity; what is within us, must manifest itself outside.

Meanwhile it is well that every false hope and confident prediction should be answered as soon as may well be by the irony of the gods; for only so can we be driven to the perception of the real remedy.

Only when man has developed not merely a fellow feeling with all men, but a dominant sense of unity and commonalty, only when he is aware of them not merely as brothers, that is a fragile bond, but as parts of himself, only when he has learned to live, not in his separate personal and communal ego-sense, but in a large universal consciousness, can the phenomenon of war, with whatever weapons, pass out of his life without the possibility of return.

Meanwhile that he should struggle even by illusions towards that end, is an excellent sign; for it shows that the truth behind the illusion is pressing towards the hour when it may become manifest as reality.

THE MORALITY OF BOYCOTT

Ages ago there was a priest of Baal who thought himself commissioned by the god to kill all who did not bow the knee to him. All men, terrified by the power and ferocity of the priest, bowed down before the idol and pretended to be his servants; and the few who refused had to take refuge in hills and deserts. At last, a deliverer came and slew the priest and the world had rest. The slayer was blamed by those who placed religion in quietude and put passivity forward as the ideal ethics but the world looked on him as an incarnation of God.

A certain class of mind shrinks from aggressiveness as if it were a sin. Their temperament forbids them to feel the delight of battle and they look on what they cannot understand as something monstrous and sinful. 'Heal hate by love', 'drive out injustice by justice', 'slay sin by righteousness' is their cry. Love is a sacred name, but it is easier to speak of love than to love. The love which drives out hate is a divine quality of which only one man in a thousand is capable. A saint full of love for all mankind possesses it, a philanthropist consumed with a desire to heal the miseries of the race possesses it, but the mass of mankind does not and cannot rise to the height. Politics is concerned with masses of mankind and not with individuals.

To ask masses of mankind to act as saints, to rise to the height of divine love and practise it in relation to their adversaries or oppressors is to ignore human nature. It is to set a premium on injustice and violence by paralysing the hand of the deliverer when raised to strike. The Gita is the best answer to those who shrink from battle as a sin, and aggression as a lowering of morality.

A poet of sweetness and love, who has done much to awaken Bengal, has written deprecating the boycott as an act of hate. The saintliness of spirit which he would see brought into politics is the reflex of his own personality colouring the political ideals of a sattwic race.

But in reality the boycott is not an act of hate. It is an act of self-defence, of aggression for the sake of self preservation. To call it an act of hate is to say that a man who is being slowly murdered, is not justified in striking at his murderer. To tell that man that he must desist from using the first effective weapon that comes to his hand, because the blow would be an act of hate, is precisely on a par with this deprecation of boycott.

Doubtless the self-defender is not precisely actuated by a feeling of holy sweetness towards his assailant: but to expect so much from human nature is impracticable. Certain religions demand it, but they have never been practised to the letter by their followers.

Hinduism recognises human nature and makes no such impossible demand. It sets one ideal for the saint, another for the man of action, a third for the trader, a fourth for the serf. To prescribe the same ideal for all is to bring about varnasañkara, the confusion of duties, and destroy society and race. If we are content to be serfs, then indeed, boycott is a sin for us, not because it is a violation of love, but because it is a violation of the Sudra's duty of obedience and contentment. Politics is the ideal of the Kshatriya, and the morality of the Kshatriya ought to govern our political actions. To impose in politics the Brahmanical duty of saintly sufferance is to preach varnasañkara.

Love has a place in politics, but it is the love of one's country, for one's countrymen, for the glory, greatness and happiness of the race, the divine ananda of self-immolation for one's fellows, the ecstasy of relieving their sufferings, the joy of seeing one's blood flow for country and freedom, the bliss of union in death with the fathers of the race. The feeling of almost physical delight in the touch of the mother-soil, of the winds that blow from Indian seas, of the rivers that stream from Indian hills, in the hearing of Indian speech, music, poetry, in the familiar sights, sounds, habits, dress, manners of our Indian life, this is the physical root of that love. The pride in our past, the pain of our present, the passion for the future are its trunk and branches. Self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness, great service, high endurance for the country are its fruit. And the sap which keeps it alive is the realisation of the Motherhood of God in the country, the vision of the Mother, the knowledge of the Mother, the perpetual contemplation, adoration and service of the Mother.

Other love than this is foreign to the motives of political action. Between nation and nation there is justice, partiality,

chivalry, duty, but not love. All love is either individual or for the self in the race or for the self in mankind. It may exist between individuals of different races, but the love of one race for another is a thing foreign to Nature. When therefore the boycott, as declared by the Indian race against the British, is stigmatised for want of love, the charge is bad psychology as well as bad morality. It is interest warring against interest, and hatred is directed not really against the race, but against the adverse interest.

If the British exploitation were to cease tomorrow, the hatred against the British race would disappear in a moment. A partial adhyaropa makes the ignorant for the moment see in the exploiters and not in the exploitation the receptacle of the hostile feeling. But like all māyā, it is an unreal feeling and sentiment and is not shared by those who think. Not hatred against foreigners, but antipathy to the evils of foreign exploitation is the true root of boycott.

If hatred is demoralising, it is also stimulating. The web of life has been made a mingled strain of good and evil and God works His ends through the evil as well as through the good. Let us discharge our minds of hate, but let us not deprecate a great and necessary movement because, in the inevitable course of human nature, it has engendered feelings of hostility and hatred. If hatred came, it was necessary that it should come as a stimulus, as a means of awakening.

When tamas, inertia, torpor have benumbed a nation, the strongest forms of rajas are necessary to break the spell; there is no form of rajas so strong as hatred. Through rajas we rise to sattva and for the Indian temperament the transition does not take long. Already the element of hatred is giving place to the clear conception of love for the Mother as the spring of our political actions.

Another question is the use of violence in the furtherance of boycott. This is, in our view, purely a matter of policy and expediency. An act of violence brings us into conflict and may be inexpedient for a race circumstanced like ours. But the moral question does not arise. The argument that to use violence is to interfere with personal liberty involves a singular misunderstanding of the very nature of politics.

The whole of politics is an interference with personal liberty. Law is such an interference; protection is such an interference; the rule which makes the will of the majority prevail is such an interference. The right to prevent such use of personal liberty as will injure the interests of the race, is the fundamental law of society. From this point of view the nation is only using its primary rights when it restrains the individual from buying or selling foreign goods.

It may be argued that peaceful compulsion is one thing, and violent compulsion, another. Social boycott may be justifiable, but not the burning or drowning of British goods. The latter method, we reply, is illegal and therefore may be inexpedient, but it is not morally unjustifiable.

The morality of the Kshatriya justifies violence in times of war, and boycott is a war. Nobody blames the Americans for throwing British tea into Boston harbour, nor can anybody blame a similar action in India on moral grounds. It is reprehensible from the point of view of law, of social peace and order, not of political morality. It has been eschewed by us because it is unwise and because it carried the battle on to a ground where we are comparatively weak, from a ground where we are strong. Under other circumstances we might have followed the American precedent, and if we had done so, historians and moralists would have applauded, not censured.

Justice and righteousness are the atmosphere of political morality, but the justice and righteousness of a fighter, not of the priest. Aggression is unjust only when unprovoked; violence, unrighteous when used wantonly or for unrighteous ends. It is a barren philosophy which applies a mechanical rule to all actions, or takes a word and tries to fit all human life into it.

The sword of the warrior is as necessary to the fulfilment of justice and righteousness as the holiness of the saint. Ramdas is not complete without Shivaji. To maintain justice and prevent the strong from despoiling, and the weak from being oppressed, is the function for which the Kshatriya was created. "Therefore," says Sri Krishna in the Mahabharata, "God created battle and armour, the sword, the bow and the dagger."

Man is of a less terrestrial mould than some would have him to be. He has an element of the divine which the politician ignores. The practical politician looks to the position at the moment and imagines that he has taken everything into consideration. He has, indeed, studied the surface and the immediate surroundings, but he has missed what lies beyond material vision. He has left out of account the divine, the incalculable in man, that element which upsets the calculations of the schemer and disconcerts the wisdom of the diplomat.

IN A series of articles, published in this paper soon after the Calcutta session of the Congress, we sought to indicate our view both of the ideal which the Congress had adopted, the ideal of Swaraj or Self-Government as it exists in the United Kingdom or the Colonies, and of the possible lines of policy by which that ideal might be attained. There are, we pointed out, only three possible policies: petitioning, an unprecedented way of attempting a nation's liberty, which cannot possibly succeed except under conditions which have not yet existed among human beings; self-development and self-help; and the old orthodox historical method of organised resistance to the existing form of Government. We acknowledge that the policy of self-development which the New Party had forced to the front, was itself a novel departure under the circumstances of modern India. Self-development of an independent nation is one thing; self-development from a state of servitude under an alien and despotic rule without the forcible or peaceful removal of that rule as an indispensable preliminary, is quite another. No national self-development is possible without the support of rÀja-Ùakti, organised political strength, commanding, and whenever necessary compelling general allegiance and obedience. A caste may develop, a particular community may develop, by its own efforts supported by a strong social organisation; a nation cannot. Industrially, socially, educationally, there can be no genuine progress carrying the whole nation forward, unless there is a central force representing either the best thought and energy of the country or else the majority of its citizens and able to enforce the views and decisions of the nation on all its constituent members. Because Japan had such a central authority, she was able in thirty years to face Europe as

an equal; because we in India neither had such an authority nor tried to develop it, but supported each tottering step by clinging to the step-motherly apron-strings of a foreign Government, our record of more than seventy years has not been equal to one year of Japan. We have fumbled through the nineteenth century, prattling of enlightenment and national regeneration; and the result has been not national progress, but national confusion and weakness.

Individuals here and there might emancipate themselves and come to greatness; particular communities might show a partial and one-sided development, for a time only; but the nation instead of progressing, sank into a very slough of weakness, helplessness and despondency. Political freedom is the life-breath of a nation; to attempt social reform, educational reform, industrial expansion, the moral improvement of the race without aiming first and foremost at political freedom, is the very height of ignorance and futility. Such attempts are foredoomed to disappointment and failure; yet when the disappointment and failure come, we choose to attribute them to some radical defect in the national character; as if the nation were at fault and not its wise men who would not or could not understand the first elementary conditions of success. The primary requisite for national progress, national reform, is the free habit of free and healthy national thought and action which is impossible in a state of servitude. The second is the organisation of the national will in a strong central authority.

How impossible it is to carry out efficiently any large national object in the absence of this authority was shown by the fate of the Boycott in Bengal. It is idle to disguise from ourselves that the Boycott is not as yet effective except spasmodically and in patches. Yet to carry through the Boycott was a solemn national decision which has not been reversed but rather repeatedly confirmed. Never indeed has the national will been so generally and unmistakably declared; but for the want of a central authority to work for the necessary conditions, to support by its ubiquitous presence the weak and irresolute and to coerce the refractory, it has not been properly carried out. For the same reason national education languishes. For the same reason every attempt at large national action has failed. It is idle to talk of self-development

unless we first evolve a suitable central authority or Government which all will or must accept.

The Japanese perceived this at a very early stage and leaving aside all other matters, devoted their first energies to the creation of such an authority in the person of the Mikado and his Government, holding it cheaply purchased even at the price of temporary internal discord and civil slaughter. We also must develop a central authority, which shall be a popular Government in fact though not in name.

But Japan was independent; we have to establish a popular authority which will exist side by side and in rivalry with a despotic foreign bureaucracy - no ordinary rough-riding despotism, but quiet, pervasive and subtle - one that has fastened its grip on every detail of our national life and will not easily be persuaded to let go, even in the least degree, its octopus-like hold. This popular authority will have to dispute every part of our national life and activity, one by one, step by step, with the intruding force to the extreme point of entire emancipation from alien control. This and no less than this is the task before us. A Moderate critic characterised it at the time as an unheroic programme; but to us it seems so heroic that we frankly acknowledge its novelty and audacity and the uncertainty of success.

For success depends on the presence of several very rare conditions. It demands in the first place a country for its field of action in which the people are more powerfully swayed by the fear of social excommunication and the general censure of their fellows than by the written law. It demands a country where the capacity for extreme self-denial is part of the national character or for centuries has taken a prominent place in the national discipline. These conditions exist in India. But it requires also an iron endurance, tenacity, doggedness, far above anything that is needed for the more usual military revolt or sanguinary revolution. These qualities we have not as yet developed at least in Bengal; but they are easily generated by suffering and necessity and hardened into permanence by a prolonged struggle with superior power. There is nothing like a strong pressure from above to harden and concentrate what lies below - always provided that the superior pressure is not such as to crush the substance on

which it is acting. The last requisite therefore for the success of the policy of self-development against the pressure of foreign rule is that the bureaucracy will so far respect its former traditions and professions as not to interfere finally with any course of action of the popular authority which does not itself try violently to subvert the connection of the British Empire with India. It is extremely doubtful whether this last condition will be satisfied. It is easy to see how the bureaucracy might put a summary end to National Education or an effective check on industrial expansion or do away arbitrarily with popular Arbitration Courts. It is easy to see how the temptation to resort to Russian methods on a much larger and effective scale than that of mere Fullerism might prove too strong for a privileged class which felt power slipping from its hold. We therefore said in our previous articles that we must carry on the attempt at self-development as long as we were permitted. What would be our next resource if it were no longer permitted, it is too early to discuss.

The attempt at self-development by self-help is absolutely necessary for our national salvation, whether we can carry it peacefully to the end or not. In no other way can we get rid of the fatal dependence, passivity and helplessness in which a century of all-pervasive British control has confirmed us. To recover the habit of independent motion and independent action is the first necessity. It was for this reason that after extreme provocation and full conviction of the hopelessness otherwise of inducing any change of policy in the older politicians, the leaders of the New School decided to form an independent party and place their views as an independent programme before the country. Their action, though much blamed at the time, has been thoroughly justified by results. The National Congress has not indeed broken with the old petitioning traditions, but it has admitted the new policy as an essential part of the national programme. Swadeshi and National Education have been recognised, and, in all probability, Arbitration will be given its proper prominence at the next session; Boycott has been admitted as permissible in principle to all parts of India though the recommendation to extend it in practice as an integral part of the national policy was not pressed. It only remained to develop the central authority which will

execute the national policy and evolve with time into a popular Government. It was for this object that the New Party determined not to be satisfied with any further evasion of the constitution question, though they did not press for the adoption of their own particular scheme. It is for this object that a Central National Committee has been formed; that Conferences are being held in various districts and sub-divisions and Committees created; that the Provincial Conferences are expected to appoint a Provincial Committee for all Bengal. The mere creation of these Committees will not provide us with our central authority, nor will they be really effective for the purpose until the new spirit and the new views are paramount in the whole country. But it is the first step which costs and the first step has been taken.

So far, well; but the opposition of the bureaucracy to the national self-development must be taken into account. Opposition, not necessarily final and violent, will undoubtedly be offered; and we have not as yet considered the organisation of any means by which it can be effectually met. Obviously, we shall have to fall back on the third policy of organised resistance, and have only to decide what form the resistance should take, passive or active, defensive or aggressive. It is well known that the New Party long ago formulated and all Bengal has in theory accepted, the doctrine of passive, or, as it might be more comprehensively termed, defensive resistance. We have therefore not only to organise a central authority, not only to take up all branches of our national life into our hands, but, in order to meet bureaucratic opposition and to compel the alien control to remove its hold on us, if not at once, then tentacle by tentacle, we must organise defensive resistance.

Object

ORGANISED resistance to an existing form of government may be undertaken either for the vindication of national liberty, or in order to substitute one form of government for another, or to remove particular objectionable features in the existing system without any entire or radical alteration of the whole, or simply for the redress of particular grievances. Our political agitation in the nineteenth century was entirely confined to the smaller and narrower objects. To replace an oppressive land revenue system by the security of a Permanent Settlement, to mitigate executive tyranny by the separation of judicial from executive functions, to diminish the drain on the country naturally resulting from foreign rule by more liberal employment of Indians in the services - to these half-way houses our wise men and political seers directed our steps, - with this limited ideal they confined the rising hopes and imaginations of a mighty people re-awakening after a great downfall.

Their political inexperience prevented them from realising that these measures on which we have misspent half a century of unavailing effort, were not only paltry and partial in their scope but in their nature ineffective. A Permanent Settlement can always be evaded by a spendthrift Government bent on increasing its resources and unchecked by any system of popular control; there is no limit to the possible number of cesses and local taxes by which the Settlement could be practically violated without any direct infringement of its provisions.

The mere deprivation of judicial functions will not disarm executive tyranny so long as both executive and judiciary are mainly white and subservient to a central authority irresponsible, alien and bureaucratic; for the central authority can always tighten its grip on the judiciary of which it is the controller and paymaster and habituate it to a consistent support of executive action. Nor will Simultaneous Examinations and the liberal appointment of Indians mend the matter; for an Englishman serves the Government as a member of the same ruling race and can afford to be occasionally independent; but the Indian civilian is a serf masquerading as a heaven-born and can only deserve favour and promotion by his zeal in fastening the yoke heavier upon his fellow-countrymen.

As a rule the foreign Government can rely on the "native" civilian to be more zealously oppressive than even the average Anglo-Indian official. Neither would the panacea of Simultaneous Examinations really put an end to the burden of the drain. The Congress insistence on the Home Charges for a long time obscured the real accusation against British rule; for it substituted a particular grievance for a radical and congenital evil implied in the very existence of British control. The huge price India has to pay England

for the inestimable privilege of being ruled by Englishmen is a small thing compared with the murderous drain by which we purchase the more exquisite privilege of being exploited by British capital. The diminution of Home Charges will not prevent the gradual death by bleeding of which exploitation is the true and abiding cause.

Thus, even for the partial objects they were intended to secure, the measures for which we petitioned and clamoured in the last century were hopelessly ineffective. So was it with all the Congress nostrums; they were palliatives which could not even be counted upon to palliate; the radical evil, uncured, would only be driven from one seat in the body politic to take refuge in others where it would soon declare its presence by equally troublesome symptoms.

The only true cure for a bad and oppressive financial system is to give the control over taxation to the people whose money pays for the needs of Government. The only effective way of putting an end to executive tyranny is to make the people and not an irresponsible Government the controller and paymaster of both executive and judiciary. The only possible method of stopping the drain is to establish a popular government which may be relied on to foster and protect Indian commerce and Indian industry conducted by Indian capital and employing Indian labour. This is the object which the new politics, the politics of the twentieth century, places before the people of India in their resistance to the present system of Government, - not tinkerings and palliatives but the substitution for the autocratic bureaucracy, which at present misgoverns us, of a free constitutional and democratic system of Government and the entire removal of foreign control in order to make way for perfect national liberty.

The redress of particular grievances and the reformation of particular objectionable features in a system of Government are sufficient objects for organised resistance only when the Government is indigenous and all classes have a recognised place in the political scheme of the State. They are not and cannot be a sufficient object in countries like Russia and India where the laws are made and administered by a handful of men, and a vast population, educated and uneducated alike, have no political

right or duty except the duty of obedience and the right to assist in confirming their own servitude. They are still less a sufficient object when the despotic oligarchy is alien by race and has not even a permanent home in the country, for in that case the Government cannot be relied on to look after the general interest of the country, as in nations ruled by indigenous despotism; on the contrary, they are bound to place the interests of their own country and their own race first and foremost. Organised resistance in subject nations which mean to live and not to die, can have no less an object than an entire and radical change of the system of Government; only by becoming responsible to the people and drawn from the people can the Government be turned into a protector instead of an oppressor. But if the subject nation desires not a provincial existence and a maimed development but the full, vigorous and noble realisation of its national existence, even a change in the system of Government will not be enough; it must aim not only at a national Government responsible to the people but a free national Government unhampered even in the least degree by foreign control.

It is not surprising that our politicians of the nineteenth century could not realise these elementary truths of modern politics. They had no national experience behind them of politics under modern conditions; they had no teachers except English books and English liberal "sympathisers" and "friends of India". Schooled by British patrons, trained to the fixed idea of English superiority and Indian inferiority, their imaginations could not embrace the idea of national liberty, and perhaps they did not even desire it at heart, preferring the comfortable ease which at that time still seemed possible in a servitude under British protection, to the struggles and sacrifices of a hard and difficult independence.

Taught to take their political lessons solely from the example of England and ignoring or not valuing the historical experience of the rest of the world, they could not even conceive of a truly popular and democratic Government in India except as the slow result of the development of centuries, progress broadening down from precedent to precedent. They could not then understand that the experience of an independent nation is not valid to guide a subject nation, unless and until the subject nation throws off the

yoke and itself becomes independent. They could not realise that the slow, painful and ultra-cautious development, necessary in mediaeval and semi-mediaeval conditions when no experience of a stable popular Government had been gained, need not be repeated in the days of the steamship, railway and telegraph, when stable democratic systems are part of the world's secured and permanent heritage.

The instructive spectacle of Asiatic nations demanding and receiving constitutional and parliamentary government as the price of a few years' struggle and civil turmoil, had not then been offered to the world. But even if the idea of such happenings had occurred to the more sanguine spirits, they would have been prevented from putting it into words by their inability to discover any means towards its fulfilment. Their whole political outlook was bounded by the lessons of English history, and in English history they found only two methods of politics, - the slow method of agitation and the swift decisive method of open struggle and revolt. Unaccustomed to independent political thinking, they did not notice the significant fact that the method of agitation only became effective in England when the people had already gained a powerful voice in the Government.

In order to secure that voice they had been compelled to resort no less than three several times to the method of open struggle and revolt. Blind to the significance of this fact, our nineteenth century politicians clung to the method of agitation, obstinately hoping against all experience and reason that it would somehow serve their purpose. From any idea of open struggle with the bureaucracy they shrank with terror and a sense of paralysis. Dominated by the idea of the overwhelming might of Britain and the abject weakness of India, their want of courage and faith in the nation, their rooted distrust of the national character, disbelief in Indian patriotism and blindness to the possibility of true political strength and virtue in the people, precluded them from discovering the rough and narrow way to salvation. Herein lies the superiority of the new school that they have an indomitable courage and faith in the nation and the people. By the strength of that courage and faith they have not only been able to enforce on the mind of the country a higher ideal but perceive an effective means to the

realisation of that ideal. By the strength of that courage and faith they have made such immense strides in the course of a few months. By the strength of that courage and faith they will dominate the future.

The new methods were first tried in the great Swadeshi outburst of the last two years, - blindly, crudely, without leading and organisation, but still with amazing results. The moving cause was a particular grievance, the Partition of Bengal; and to the removal of the particular grievance, pettiest and narrowest of all political objects, our old leaders strove hard to confine the use of this new and mighty weapon. But the popular instinct was true to itself and would have none of it. At a bound we passed therefore from mere particular grievances, however serious and intolerable, to the use of passive resistance as a means of cure for the basest and evilest feature of the present system, - the bleeding to death of a country by foreign exploitation. And from that stage we are steadily advancing, under the guidance of such able political thinking as modern India has not before seen and with the rising tide of popular opinion at our back, to the one true object of all resistance, passive or active, aggressive or defensive, - the creation of a free popular Government and the vindication of Indian liberty.

Necessity

WE HAVE defined, so far, the occasion and the ultimate object of the passive resistance we preach. It is the only effective means, except actual armed revolt, by which the organised strength of the nation, gathering to a powerful central authority and guided by the principle of self-development and self-help, can wrest the control of our national life from the grip of an alien bureaucracy, and thus, developing into a free popular Government, naturally replace the bureaucracy it extrudes until the process culminates in a self-governed India, liberated from foreign control. The mere effort at self-development unaided by some kind of resistance, will not materially help us towards our goal. Merely by developing national schools and colleges we shall not induce or force the bureaucracy to give up to us the control of education. Merely by attempting to expand some of our trades and industries, we shall not drive out the British exploiter or take from the British Government its sovereign power of regulating, checking or killing

the growth of Swadeshi industries by the imposition of judicious taxes and duties and other methods always open to the controller of a country's finance and legislation. Still less shall we be able by that harmless means to get for ourselves the control of taxation and expenditure. Nor shall we, merely by establishing our own arbitration courts, oblige the alien control to give up the elaborate and lucrative system of Civil and Criminal Judicature which at once emasculates the nation and makes it pay heavily for its own emasculation.

In none of these matters is the bureaucracy likely to budge an inch from its secure position unless it is forcibly persuaded. The control of the young mind in its most impressionable period is of vital importance to the continuance of the hypnotic spell by which alone the foreign domination manages to subsist; the exploitation of the country is the chief reason for its existence; the control of the judiciary is one of its chief instruments of repression. None of these things can it yield up without bringing itself nearer to its doom. It is only by organised national resistance, passive or aggressive, that we can make our self-development effectual. For if the self-help movement only succeeds in bringing about some modification of educational methods, some readjustment of the balance of trade, some alleviation of the curse of litigation, then, whatever else it may have succeeded in doing, it will have failed of its main object.

The new school at least have not advocated the policy of self-development merely out of a disinterested ardour for moral improvement or under the spur of an inoffensive philanthropic patriotism. This attitude they leave to saints and philosophers, - saints like the editor of the Indian Mirror or philosophers like the ardent Indian Liberals who sit at the feet of Mr. John Morley. They for their part speak and write frankly as politicians aiming at a definite and urgent political object by a way which shall be reasonably rapid and yet permanent in its results. We may have our own educational theories; but we advocate national education not as an educational experiment or to subserve any theory, but as the only way to secure truly national and patriotic control and discipline for the mind of the country in its malleable youth. We desire industrial expansion, but Swadeshi without boycott, - non-political Swadeshi, - Lord Minto's "honest" Swadeshi - has no attractions for us; since we know that it can bring no safe and permanent national gain; - that can only be secured by the industrial and fiscal independence of the Indian nation. Our immediate problem as a nation is not how to be intellectual and well-informed or how to be rich and industrious, but how to stave off imminent national death, how to put an end to the white peril, how to assert ourselves and live. It is for this reason that whatever minor differences there may be between different exponents of the new spirit, they are all agreed on the immediate necessity of an organised national resistance to the state of things which is crushing us out of existence as a nation and on the one goal of that resistance, - freedom.

Organised national resistance to existing conditions, whether directed against the system of Government as such or against some particular feature of it, has three courses open to it. It may attempt to make administration under existing conditions impossible by an organised passive resistance. This was the policy initiated by the genius of Parnell when by the plan of campaign he prevented the payment of rents in Ireland and by persistent obstruction hampered the transaction of any but Irish business in Westminster. It may attempt to make administration under existing conditions impossible by an organised aggressive resistance in the shape of an untiring and implacable campaign of assassination and a confused welter of riots, strikes and agrarian risings all over the country. This is the spectacle we have all watched with such eager interest in Russia.

We have seen the most absolute autocrat and the most powerful and ruthless bureaucracy in the world still in unimpaired possession of all the most effective means of repression, yet beaten to the knees by the determined resistance of an unarmed nation. It has mistakenly been said that the summoning of the Duma was a triumph for passive resistance. But the series of strikes on a gigantic scale which figured so largely in the final stages of the struggle was only one feature of that widespread, desperate and unappeasable anarchy which led to the first triumph of Russian liberty. Against such an anarchy the mightiest and best-organised Government must necessarily feel helpless; its repression would

demand a systematic and prolonged course of massacre on a colossal scale the prospect of which would have paralysed the vigour of the most ruthless and energetic despotism even of mediaeval times. Only by concessions and compromises could such a resistance be overcome. The third course open to an oppressed nation is that of armed revolt, which instead of bringing existing conditions to an end by making their continuance impossible sweeps them bodily out of existence. This is the old time-honoured method which the oppressed or enslaved have always adopted by preference in the past, and will adopt in the future if they see any chance of success; for it is the readiest and swiftest, the most thorough in its results, and demands the least powers of endurance and suffering and the smallest and briefest sacrifices.

The choice by a subject nation of the means it will use for vindicating its liberty, is best determined by the circumstances of its servitude. The present circumstances in India seem to point to passive resistance as our most natural and suitable weapon. We would not for a moment be understood to base this conclusion upon any condemnation of other methods as in all circumstances criminal and unjustifiable.

It is the common habit of established Governments and especially those which are themselves oppressors, to brand all violent methods in subject peoples and communities as criminal and wicked. When you have disarmed your slaves and legalised the infliction of bonds, stripes and death on any one of them, man, woman or child, who may dare to speak or to act against you, it is natural and convenient to try and lay a moral as well as a legal ban on any attempt to answer violence by violence, the knout by the revolver, the prison by riot or agrarian rising, the gallows by the dynamite bomb.

But no nation yet has listened to the cant of the oppressor when itself put to the test, and the general conscience of humanity approves the refusal. Under certain circumstances a civil struggle becomes in reality a battle and the morality of war is different from the morality of peace. To shrink from bloodshed and violence under such circumstances is a weakness deserving as severe a rebuke as Sri Krishna addressed to Arjuna when he shrank from

the colossal civil slaughter on the field of Kurukshetra. Liberty is the life-breath of a nation; and when the life is attacked, when it is sought to suppress all chance of breathing by violent pressure, any and every means of self-preservation becomes right and justifiable, - just as it is lawful for a man who is being strangled to rid himself of the pressure on his throat by any means in his power.

It is the nature of the pressure which determines the nature of the resistance. Where, as in Russia, the denial of liberty is enforced by legalised murder and outrage, or, as in Ireland formerly, by brutal coercion, the answer of violence to violence is justified and inevitable. Where the need for immediate liberty is urgent and it is a present question of national life or death on the instant, revolt is the only course. But where the oppression is legal and subtle in its methods and respects life, liberty and property and there is still breathing time, the circumstances demand that we should make the experiment of a method of resolute but peaceful resistance which, while less bold and aggressive than other methods, calls for perhaps as much heroism of a kind and certainly more universal endurance and suffering. In other methods, a daring minority purchase with their blood the freedom of the millions; but for passive resistance it is necessary that all should share in the struggle and the privation.

This peculiar character of passive resistance is one reason why it has found favour with the thinkers of the New Party. There are certain moral qualities necessary to self-government which have become atrophied by long disuse in our people and can only be restored either by the healthy air of a free national life in which alone they can permanently thrive or by their vigorous exercise in the intensity of a national struggle for freedom. If by any possibility the nation can start its career of freedom with a fully developed unity and strength, it will certainly have a better chance of immediate greatness hereafter. Passive resistance affords the best possible training for these qualities. Something also is due to our friends, the enemy. We have ourselves made them reactionary and oppressive and deserved the Government we possess. The reason why even a radical opportunist like Mr. Morley refuses us self-government is not that he does not believe in India's fitness for self-government, but that he does not believe in India's

determination to be free; on the contrary, the whole experience of the past shows that we have not been in earnest in our demand for self-government. We should put our determination beyond a doubt and thereby give England a chance of redeeming her ancient promises, made when her rule was still precarious and unstable. For the rest, circumstances still favour the case of passive resistance. In spite of occasional Fullerism, the bureaucracy has not yet made up its mind to a Russian system of repression. It is true that for India also it is now a question of national life or death. Morally and materially she has been brought to the verge of exhaustion and decay by the bureaucratic rule and any farther acquiescence in servitude will result in that death-sleep of centuries from which a nation, if it ever awakes at all, awakes emaciated, feeble and unable to resume its true rank in the list of the peoples. But there is still time to try the effect of an united and unflinching pressure of passive resistance. The resistance, if it is to be of any use, must be united and unflinching. If from any timidity or selfishness or any mistaken ideas of caution and moderation, our Moderate patriots succeed in breaking the unity and weakening the force of the resistance, the movement will fail and India will sink into those last depths of degradation when only desperate remedies will be of any utility. The advocates of self-development and defensive resistance are no extremists but are trying to give the country its last chance of escaping the necessity of extremism. Defensive resistance is the sole alternative to that ordeal of sanguinary violence on both sides through which all other countries, not excepting the Moderates' exemplar England, have been compelled to pass, only at last "embracing Liberty over a heap of corpses".

Its Methods

THE essential difference between passive or defensive and active or aggressive resistance is this, that while the method of the aggressive resister is to do something by which he can bring about positive harm to the Government, the method of the passive resister is to abstain from doing something by which he would be helping the Government. The object in both cases is the same, - to force the hands of the Government; the line of attack is different. The passive method is especially suitable to countries where the Government depends mainly for the continuance of its

administration on the voluntary help and acquiescence of the subject people. The first principle of passive resistance, therefore, which the new school have placed in the forefront of their programme, is to make administration under present conditions impossible by an organised refusal to do anything which shall help either British commerce in the exploitation of the country or British officialdom in the administration of it, - unless and until the conditions are changed in the manner and to the extent demanded by the people. This attitude is summed up in the one word, Boycott. If we consider the various departments of the administration one by one, we can easily see how administration in each can be rendered impossible by successfully organised refusal of assistance. We are dissatisfied with the fiscal and economical conditions of British rule in India, with the foreign exploitation of the country, the continual bleeding of its resources, the chronic famine and rapid impoverishment which result, the refusal of the Government to protect the people and their industries. Accordingly, we refuse to help the process of exploitation and impoverishment in our capacity as consumers, we refuse henceforth to purchase foreign and especially British goods or to condone their purchase by others. By an organised and relentless boycott of British goods, we propose to render the further exploitation of the country impossible.

We are dissatisfied also with the conditions under which education is imparted in this country, its calculated poverty and insufficiency, its antinational character, its subordination to the Government and the. use made of that subordination for the discouragement of patriotism and the inculcation of loyalty. Accordingly we refuse to send our boys to Government schools or to schools aided and controlled by the Government; if this educational boycott is general and well-organised, the educational administration of the country will be rendered impossible and the control of its youthful minds pass out of the hands of the foreigner. We are dissatisfied with the administration of justice, the ruinous costliness of the civil side, the brutal rigour of its criminal penalties and procedure, its partiality, its frequent subordination to political objects. We refuse accordingly to have any resort to the alien courts of justice, and by an organised judicial boycott propose to make the bureaucratic administration of justice impossible while these conditions continue. Finally, we disapprove of the executive

administration, its arbitrariness, its meddling and inquisitorial character, its thoroughness of repression, its misuse of the police for the repression instead of the protection of the people. We refuse, accordingly, to go to the executive for help or advice or protection or to tolerate any paternal interference in our public activities, and by an organised boycott of the executive propose to reduce executive control and interference to a mere skeleton of its former self. The bureaucracy depends for the success of its administration on the help of the few and the acquiescence of the many. If the few refused to help, if Indians no longer consented to teach in Government schools or work in Government offices, or serve the alien as police, the administration could not continue for a day. We will suppose the bureaucracy able to fill their places by Eurasians, aliens or traitors; even then the refusal of the many to acquiesce, by the simple process of no longer resorting to Government schools, courts of justice or magistrates' Katcherries, would put an end to administration.

Such is the nature of passive resistance as preached by the new school in India. It is at once clear that self-development and such a scheme of passive resistance are supplementary and necessary to each other. If we refuse to supply our needs from foreign sources, we must obviously supply them ourselves; we cannot have the industrial boycott without Swadeshi and the expansion of indigenous industries. If we decline to enter the alien courts of justice, we must have arbitration courts of our own to settle our disputes and differences. If we do not send our boys to schools owned or controlled by the Government, we must have schools of our own in which they may receive a thorough and national education. If we do not go for protection to the executive, we must have a system of self-protection and mutual protection of our own. Just as Swadeshi is the natural accompaniment of an industrial boycott, so also arbitration stands in the same relation to a judicial boycott, national education to an educational boycott, a league of mutual defence to an executive boycott. From this close union of self-help with passive resistance it also follows that the new politics do not contemplate the organisation of passive resistance as a temporary measure for partial ends. It is not to be dropped as soon as the Government undertakes the protection of indigenous industries, reforms its system of education, improves its courts of justice and moderates its executive rigour and ubiquity,

but only when the control of all these functions is vested in a free, constitutional and popular Government. We have learned by bitter experience that an alien and irresponsible bureaucracy cannot be relied upon to abstain from rescinding its reforms when convenient or to manage even a reformed administration in the interests of the people.

The possibilities of passive resistance are not exhausted by the refusal of assistance to the administration. In Europe its more usual weapon is the refusal to pay taxes. The strenuous political instinct of European races teaches them to aim a direct blow at the most vital part of the administration rather than to undermine it by slower and more gradual means. The payment of taxes is the most direct assistance given by the community to the administration and the most visible symbol of acquiescence and approval. To refuse payment is at once the most emphatic protest possible short of taking up arms, and the sort of attack which the administration will feel immediately and keenly and must therefore parry at once either by conciliation or by methods of repression which will give greater vitality and intensity to the opposition. The refusal to pay taxes is a natural and logical result of the attitude of passive resistance.

A boycott of Government schools, for example, may be successful and national schools substituted; but the administration continues to exact from the people a certain amount of revenue for the purposes of education, and is not likely to relinquish its claims; the people will therefore have doubly to tax themselves in order to maintain national education and also to maintain the Government system by which they no longer profit. Under such circumstances the refusal to pay for an education of which they entirely disapprove, comes as a natural consequence. This was the form of resistance offered by the Dissenters in England to the Education Act of the last Conservative Government. The refusal to pay rents was the backbone of the Irish Plan of Campaign. The refusal to pay taxes levied by an Imperial Government in which they had no voice or share, was the last form of resistance offered by the American Colonists previous to taking up arms. Ultimately, in case of the persistent refusal of the administration to listen to reason, the refusal to pay taxes is the strongest and final form of passive resistance.

This stronger sort of passive resistance has not been included by the new party in its immediate programme, and for valid reasons. In the first place, all the precedents for this form of resistance were accompanied by certain conditions which do not as yet obtain in India. In the Irish instance, the refusal was not to pay Government taxes but to pay rents to a landlord class who represented an unjust and impoverishing land system maintained in force by a foreign power against the wishes of the people; but in India the foreign bureaucracy has usurped the functions of the landlord, except in Bengal where a refusal to pay rents would injure not a landlord-class supported by the alien but a section of our own countrymen who have been intolerably harassed, depressed and burdened by bureaucratic policy and bureaucratic exactions and fully sympathise, for the most part, with the national movement. In all other parts of India the refusal to pay rents would be a refusal to pay a Government tax.

This, as we have said, is the strongest, the final form of passive resistance, and differs from the method of political boycott which involves no breach of legal obligation or direct defiance of administrative authority. No man can be legally punished for using none but Swadeshi articles or persuading others to follow his example or for sending his boys to a National in preference to a Government school, or for settling his differences with others out of court, or for defending his person and property or helping to defend the person and property of his neighbours against criminal attack. If the administration interferes with the people in the exercise of these legitimate rights, it invites and compels defiance of its authority and for what may follow, the rulers and not the people are responsible. But the refusal to pay taxes is a breach of legal obligation and a direct defiance of administrative authority precisely of that kind which the administration can least afford to neglect and must either conciliate or crush. In a free country, the attempt at repression would probably go no farther than the forcible collection of the payments refused by legal distraint; but in a subject country the bureaucracy, feeling itself vitally threatened, would naturally supplement this legal process by determined prosecution and persecution of the advocates of the policy and its adherents, and, in all probability, by extreme military and police violence. The refusal to pay taxes would, therefore, inevitably bring about the last desperate struggle between the forces of national aspiration and alien repression. It would be in the nature of an ultimatum from the people to the Government. The case of the English Dissenters, although it was a refusal to pay taxes, differed materially from ours. The object of their passive resistance was not to bring the Government to its knees, but to generate so strong a feeling in the country that the Conservative Government would be ignominiously brushed out of office at the next elections. They had the all-powerful weapon of the vote and could meet and overthrow injustice at the polling-station. In India we are very differently circumstanced. The resistance of the American colonists offers a nearer parallel. Like ourselves the Americans met oppression with the weapon of boycott.

They were not wholly dependent on England and had their own legislatures in local affairs; so they had no occasion to extend the boycott to all departments of national life nor to attempt a general policy of national self-development. Their boycott was limited to British goods. They had however to go beyond the boycott and refuse to pay the taxes imposed on them against their will; but when they offered the ultimatum to the mother country, they were prepared to follow it up, if necessary, and did finally follow it up by a declaration of independence, supported by armed revolt. Here again there is a material difference from Indian conditions. An ultimatum should never be presented unless one is prepared to follow it up to its last consequences. Moreover, in a vast country like India, any such general conflict with dominant authority as is involved in a no-taxes policy, needs for its success a close organisation linking province to province and district to district and a powerful central authority representing the single will of the whole nation which could alone fight on equal terms the final struggle of defensive resistance with bureaucratic repression. Such an organisation and authority has not yet been developed. The new politics, therefore, confines itself for the time to the policy of lawful abstention from any kind of co-operation with the Government, - the policy of boycott which is capable of gradual extension, leaving to the bureaucracy the onus of forcing on a more direct, sudden and dangerous struggle. Its principle at present is not "no representation, no taxation," but "no control, no assistance".

Obligations

IN THE early days of the new movement it was declared, in a very catching phrase, by a politician who has now turned his back on the doctrine which made him famous, that a subject nation has no politics. And it was commonly said that we as a subject nation should altogether ignore the Government and turn our attention to emancipation by self-help and self-development. This was the self-development principle carried to its extreme conclusions, and it is not surprising that phrases so trenchant and absolute should have given rise to some misunderstanding. It was even charged against us by Sir Pherozshah Mehta and other robust exponents of the opposition-cum-cooperation theory that we were advocating non-resistance and submission to political wrong and injustice! Much water has flowed under the bridges since then, and now we are being charged, in deputations to the Viceroy and elsewhere, with the opposite offence of inflaming and fomenting disturbance and rebellion. Yet our policy remains essentially the same, - not to ignore such a patent and very troublesome fact as the alien bureaucracy, for that was never our policy, - but to have nothing to do with it, in the way either of assistance or acquiescence. Far from preaching non-resistance, it has now become abundantly clear that our determination not to submit to political wrong and injustice was far deeper and sterner than that of our critics. The method of opposition differed, of course. The Moderate method of resistance was verbal only - prayer, petition and protest; the method we proposed was practical, - boycott. But, as we have pointed out, our new method, though more concrete, was in itself quite as legal and peaceful as the old. It is no offence by law to abstain from Government schools or Government courts of justice or the help and protection of the fatherly executive or the use of British goods; nor is it illegal to persuade others to join in our abstention.

At the same time this legality is neither in itself an essential condition of passive resistance generally, nor can we count upon its continuance as an actual condition of passive resistance as it is to be understood and practised in India. The passive resister in other countries has always been prepared to break an unjust and oppressive law whenever necessary and to take the legal consequences, as the non-Conformists in England did when they

refused to pay the education rate, or as Hampden did when he refused to pay ship-money. Even under present conditions in India there is at least one direction in which, it appears, many of us are already breaking what Anglo-Indian courts have determined to be the law.

The law relating to sedition and the law relating to the offence of causing racial enmity are so admirably vague in their terms that there is nothing which can escape from their capacious embrace. It appears from the Punjabee case that it is a crime under bureaucratic rule to say that Europeans hold Indian life cheaply, although this is a fact which case after case has proved, and although British justice has confirmed this cheap valuation of our lives by the leniency of its sentences on European murderers; nay, it is a crime to impute such failings to British justice or to say even that departmental enquiries into "accidents" of this kind cannot be trusted, although this is a conviction in which, as everyone is aware, the whole country is practically unanimous as the result of repeated experiences. All this is not crime indeed when we do it in order to draw the attention of the bureaucracy in the vain hope of getting the grievance redressed. But if our motive is to draw the attention of the people and enlighten them on the actual and inevitable results of irresponsible rule by aliens and the dominance of a single community, we are criminals, we are guilty of breaking the law of the alien. Yet to break the law in this respect is the duty of every self-respecting publicist who is of our way of thinking. It is our duty to drive home to the public mind the congenital and incurable evils of the present system of Government, so that they may insist on its being swept away in order to make room for a more healthy and natural state of things. It is our duty also to press upon the people the hopelessness of appealing to the bureaucracy to reform itself and the uselessness of any partial measures. No publicist of the new school holding such views ought to mar his reputation for candour and honesty by the pretence of drawing the attention of the Government with a view to redress the grievance.

If the alien laws have declared it illegal for him to do his duty, unless he lowers himself by covering it with a futile and obvious lie, he must still do his duty, however illegal, in the strength of his manhood; and if the bureaucracy decide to send him to prison

for the breach of law, to prison he must willingly and, if he is worth his salt, rejoicingly go. The new spirit will not suffer any individual aspiring to speak or act on behalf of the people to palter with the obligation of high truthfulness and unflinching courage without which no one has a claim to lead or instruct his fellow-countrymen.

If this penalty of sedition is at present the chief danger which the adherent or exponent of passive resistance runs under the law, yet there is no surety that it will continue to be unaccompanied by similar or more serious perils. The making of the laws is at present in the hands of our political adversaries and there is nothing to prevent them from using this power in any way they like, however iniquitous or tyrannical, - nothing except their fear of public reprobation outside and national resistance within India. At present they hope by the seductive allurements of Morleyism to smother the infant strength of the national spirit in its cradle; but as that hope is dissipated and the doctrine of passive resistance takes more and more concrete and organised form, the temptation to use the enormously powerful weapon which the unhampered facility of legislation puts in their hands, will become irresistible. The passive resister must therefore take up his creed with the certainty of having to suffer for it. If, for instance, the bureaucracy should make abstention from Government schools or teaching without Government licence a penal offence, he must continue to abstain or teach and take the legal consequences. Or if they forbid the action of arbitration courts other than those sanctioned by Government, he must yet continue to act on such courts or have recourse to them without considering the peril to which he exposes himself. And so throughout the whole range of action covered by the new politics. A law imposed by a people on itself has a binding force which cannot be ignored except under extreme necessity: a law imposed from outside has no such moral sanction; its claim to obedience must rest on coercive force or on its own equitable and beneficial character and not on the source from which it proceeds. If it is unjust and oppressive, it may become a duty to disobey it and quietly endure the punishment which the law has provided for its violation. For passive resistance aims at making a law unworkable by general and organised disobedience and so procuring its recall; it does not try, like aggressive resistance, to

destroy the law by destroying the power which made and supports the law. It is therefore the first canon of passive resistance that to break an unjust coercive law is not only justifiable but, under given circumstances, a duty.

Legislation, however, is not the only weapon in the hands of the bureaucracy. They may try, without legislation, by executive action, to bring opposition under the terms of the law and the lash of its penalties. This may be done either by twisting a perfectly legal act into a criminal offence or misdemeanour with the aid of the ready perjuries of the police or by executive order or ukase making illegal an action which had previously been allowed. We have had plenty of experience of both these contrivances during the course of the Swadeshi movement.

To persuade an intending purchaser not to buy British cloth is no offence; but if, between a police employed to put down Swadeshi and a shopkeeper injured by it, enough evidence can be concocted to twist persuasion into compulsion, the boycotter can easily be punished without having committed any offence. Executive orders are an even more easily-handled weapon. The issuing of an ukase asks for no more trouble than the penning of a few lines by a clerk and the more or less illegible signature of a District Magistrate; and hey-presto! that brief magical abracadabra of despotism has turned an action, which five minutes ago was legitimate and inoffensive into a crime or misdemeanour punishable in property or person. Whether it is the simple utterance of 'Bande Mataram' in the streets or an august assemblage of all that is most distinguished, able and respected in the country, one stroke of a mere District Magistrate's omnipotent pen is enough to make them illegalities and turn the elect of the nation into disorderly and riotous Budmashes to be dispersed by police cudgels. To hope for any legal redress is futile; for the power of the executive to issue ukases is perfectly vague and therefore practically illimitable, and wherever there is a doubt, it can be brought within the one all-sufficient formula, - "It was done by the Magistrate in exercise of the discretion given him for preserving the peace." The formula can cover any ukase or any action, however arbitrary; and what British Judge can refuse his support to a British Magistrate in that preservation of peace which is as necessary to the authority and safety of the Judge as to that of the

Magistrate? But equally is it impossible for the representatives of popular aspirations to submit to such paralysing exercise of an irresponsible and unlimited authority. This has been universally recognised in Bengal. Executive authority was defied by all Bengal when its representatives, with Babu Surendranath Banerji at their head, escorted their President through the streets of Barisal with the forbidden cry of 'Bande Mataram'. If the dispersal of the Conference was not resisted, it was not from respect for executive authority but purely for reasons of political strategy. Immediately afterwards the right of public meeting was asserted in defiance of executive ukase by the Moderate leaders near Barisal itself and by prominent politicians of the new school in East Bengal. The second canon of the doctrine of passive resistance has therefore been accepted by politicians of both schools - that to resist an unjust coercive order or interference is not only justifiable but, under given circumstances, a duty.

Finally, we must be prepared for opposition not only from our natural but from unnatural adversaries, - not only from bureaucrat and Anglo-Indian, but from the more self-seeking and treacherous of our own countrymen. In a rebellion such treachery is of small importance, since in the end it is the superior fate or the superior force which triumphs; but in a campaign of passive resistance the evil example, if unpunished, may be disastrous and eat fatally into the enthusiastic passion and serried unity indispensable to such a movement. It is therefore necessary to mete out the heaviest penalty open to us in such cases - the penalty of social excommunication. We are not in favour of this weapon being lightly used; but its employment, where the national will in a vital matter is deliberately disregarded, becomes essential. Such disregard amounts to siding in matters of life and death against your own country and people and helping in their destruction or enslavement, - a crime which in Free States is punished with the extreme penalty due to treason. When, for instance, all Bengal staked its future upon the Boycott and specified three foreign articles, - salt, sugar and cloth, - as to be religiously avoided, anyone purchasing foreign salt or foreign sugar or foreign cloth became guilty of treason to the nation and laid himself open to the penalty of social boycott. Wherever passive resistance has been accepted, the necessity of the social boycott has been

recognised as its natural concomitant. "Boycott foreign goods and boycott those who use foreign goods," - the advice of Mr. Subramaniya Aiyar to his countrymen in Madras, - must be accepted by all who are in earnest. For without this boycott of persons the boycott of things cannot be effective; without the social boycott no national authority depending purely on moral pressure can get its decrees effectively executed; and without effective boycott enforced by a strong national authority the new policy cannot succeed. But the only possible alternatives to the new policy are either despotism tempered by petitions or aggressive resistance. We must therefore admit a third canon of the doctrine of passive resistance, that social boycott is legitimate and indispensable as against persons guilty of treason to the nation.

Its Limits

THE three canons of the doctrine of passive resistance are in reality three necessities which must, whether we like it or not, be accepted in theory and executed in practice, if passive resistance is to have any chance of success. Passive resisters, both as individuals and in the mass, must always be prepared to break an unjust coercive law and take the legal consequence; for if they shrink from this obligation, the bureaucracy can at once make passive resistance impossible simply by adding a few more enactments to their book of statutes. A resistance which can so easily be snuffed out of being is not worth making. For the same reason they must be prepared to disobey an unjust and coercive executive order whether general or particular; for nothing would be simpler than to put down by a few months' coercion a resistance too weak to face the consequences of refusing submission to Government by ukase. They must be prepared to boycott persons guilty of deliberate disobedience to the national will in vital matters because, if they do not, the example of unpunished treason will tend to be repeated and destroy by a kind of dry rot the enthusiastic unity and universality which we have seen to be necessary to the success of passive resistance of the kind we have inaugurated in India. Men in the mass are strong and capable of wonder-working enthusiasms and irresistible movements; but the individual average man is apt to be weak or selfish and, unless he sees that the mass are in deadly earnest and will not tolerate individual treachery, he will usually, after the first enthusiasm, indulge his weakness

or selfishness to the detriment of the community. We have seen this happening almost everywhere where the boycott of foreign goods was not enforced by the boycott of persons buying foreign goods. This is one important reason why the boycott which has maintained itself in East Bengal, is in the West becoming more and more of a failure.

The moment these three unavoidable obligations are put into force, the passive resistance movement will lose its character of inoffensive legality and we shall be in the thick of a struggle which may lead us anywhere. Passive resistance, when it is confined - as at present - to lawful abstention from actions which it lies within our choice as subjects to do or not to do, is of the nature of the strategical movements and large manoeuvrings previous to the meeting of armies in the field; but the enforcement of our three canons brings us to the actual shock of battle. Nevertheless our resistance still retains an essential character of passivity. If the right of public meeting is suspended by Magisterial ukase, we confine ourselves to the practical assertion of the right in defiance of the ukase and, so long as the executive also confines itself to the dispersal of the meeting by the arrest of its conveners and other peaceful and legal measures, we offer no active resistance. We submit to the arrest, though not necessarily to the dispersal, and quietly take the legal consequences. Similarly, if the law forbids us to speak or write the truth as we conceive it our duty to speak it, we persist in doing our duty and submit quietly to whatever punishment the law of sedition or any other law coercive ingenuity may devise, can find to inflict on us. In a peaceful way we act against the law or the executive, but we passively accept the legal consequences. There is a limit however to passive resistance. So long as the action of the executive is peaceful and within the rules of the fight, the passive resister scrupulously maintains his attitude of passivity, but he is not bound to do so a moment beyond. To submit to illegal or violent methods of coercion, to accept outrage and hooliganism as part of the legal procedure of the country is to be guilty of cowardice, and, by dwarfing national manhood, to sin against the divinity within ourselves and the divinity in our motherland. The moment coercion of this kind is attempted, passive resistance ceases and active resistance becomes a duty. If the instruments of the executive choose to disperse our meeting by breaking the heads of those present, the right of self-defence entitles us not merely to defend our heads but to retaliate on those of the head-breakers.

For the myrmidons of the law have ceased then to be guardians of the peace and become breakers of the peace, rioters and not instruments of authority, and their uniform is no longer a bar to the right of self-defence. Nor does it make any difference if the instruments of coercion happen to be the recognised and usual instruments or are unofficial hooligans in alliance or sympathy with the forces of coercion. In both cases active resistance becomes a duty and passive resistance is, for that occasion, suspended. But though no longer passive, it is still a defensive resistance. Nor does resistance pass into the aggressive stage so long as it resists coercive violence in its own kind and confines itself to repelling attack. Even if it takes the offensive, it does not by that mere fact become aggressive resistance, unless the amount of aggression exceeds what is necessary to make defence effective. The students of Mymensingh, charged by the police while picketing, kept well within the right of self-defence when they drove the rioters off the field of operations; the gentlemen of Comilla kept well within the rights of self-defence if they attacked either rioters or inciters of riot who either offered, or threatened, or tried to provoke assault. Even the famous shot which woke the authorities from their waking dreams, need not have been an act of aggression if it was fired to save life or a woman's honour or under circumstances of desperation when no other means of defence would have been effective. With the doubtful exception of this shot, supposing it to have been fired unnecessarily, and that other revolver shot which killed Mr. Rand, there has been no instance of aggressive resistance in modern Indian politics.

The new politics, therefore, while it favours passive resistance, does not include meek submission to illegal outrage under that term; it has no intention of overstressing the passivity at the expense of the resistance. Nor is it inclined to be hysterical over a few dozen of broken heads or exalt so simple a matter as a bloody coxcomb into the crown of martyrdom. This sort of hysterical exaggeration was too common in the early days of the movement when everyone who got his crown cracked in a street affray with the police was encouraged to lift up his broken head before the world and cry out, "This is the head of a martyr." The

new politics is a serious doctrine and not, like the old, a thing of shows and political theatricals; it demands real sufferings from its adherents, - imprisonment, worldly ruin, death itself, before it can allow him to assume the rank of a martyr for his country. Passive resistance cannot build up a strong and great nation unless it is masculine, bold and ardent in its spirit and ready at any moment and at the slightest notice to supplement itself with active resistance. We do not want to develop a nation of women who know only how to suffer and not how to strike.

Morever, the new politics must recognise the fact that beyond a certain point passive resistance puts a strain on human endurance which our natures cannot endure. This may come in particular instances where an outrage is too great or the stress of tyranny too unendurable for anyone to stand purely on the defensive; to hit back, to assail and crush the assailant, to vindicate one's manhood becomes an imperious necessity to outraged humanity. Or it may come in the mass when the strain of oppression a whole nation has to meet in its unarmed struggle for liberty, overpasses its powers of endurance. It then becomes the sole choice either to break under the strain and go under or to throw it off with violence. The Spartan soldiers at Plataea endured for some time the missiles of the enemy and saw their comrades falling at their side without any reply because their general had not yet declared it to be the auspicious time for attack; but if the demand on their passive endurance had been too long continued, they must either have broken in disastrous defeat or flung themselves on the enemy in disregard of their leader's orders. The school of politics which we advocate is not based upon abstractions, formulas and dogmas, but on practical necessities and the teaching of political experience, common sense and the world's history. We have not the slightest wish to put forward passive resistance as an inelastic dogma. We preach defensive resistance mainly passive in its methods at present, but active whenever active resistance is needed; but defensive resistance within the limits imposed by human nature and by the demands of self-respect and the militant spirit of true manhood. If at any time the laws obtaining in India or the executive action of the bureaucracy were to become so oppressive as to render a struggle for liberty on the lines we have indicated, impossible; if after a fair trial given to this method, the object with which we undertook it, proved to be as far off as ever; or if passive

resistance should turn out either not feasible or necessarily ineffectual under the conditions of this country, we should be the first to recognise that everything must be reconsidered and that the time for new men and new methods had arrived. We recognise no political object of worship except the divinity in our Motherland, no present object of political endeavour except liberty, and no method or action as politically good or evil except as it truly helps or hinders our progress towards national emancipation.

CONCLUSIONS

TO SUM up the conclusions at which we have arrived. The object of all our political movements and therefore the sole object with which we advocate passive resistance is Swaraj or national freedom. The latest and most venerable of the older politicians who have sat in the Presidential Chair of the Congress, pronounced from that seat of authority Swaraj as the one object of our political endeavour, - Swaraj as the only remedy for all our ills, - Swaraj as the one demand nothing short of which will satisfy the people of India. Complete self-government as it exists in the United Kingdom or the Colonies, - such was his definition of Swaraj. The Congress has contented itself with demanding self-government as it exists in the Colonies. We of the new school would not pitch our ideal one inch lower than absolute Swaraj, - self-government as it exists in the United Kingdom. We believe that no smaller ideal can inspire national revival or nerve the people of India for the fierce, stubborn and formidable struggle by which alone they can again become a nation. We believe that this newly awakened people, when it has gathered its strength together, neither can nor ought to consent to any relations with England less than that of equals in a confederacy. To be content with the relations of master and dependent or superior and subordinate, would be a mean and pitiful aspiration unworthy of manhood; to strive for anything less than a strong and glorious freedom would be to insult the greatness of our past and the magnificent possibilities of our future.

To the ideal we have at heart there are three paths, possible or impossible. Petitioning, which we have so long followed, we reject as impossible, - the dream of a timid inexperience, the teaching of false friends who hope to keep us in perpetual

subjection, foolish to reason, false to experience. Self-development by self-help which we now purpose to follow, is a possible though uncertain path, never yet attempted under such difficulties, but one which must be attempted, if for nothing else yet to get free of the habit of dependence and helplessness, and re-awaken and exercise our half-atrophied powers of self-government. Parallel to this attempt and to be practised simultaneously, the policy of organised resistance to the present system of government forms the old traditional way of nations which we also must tread. It is a vain dream to suppose that what other nations have won by struggle and battle, by suffering and tears of blood, we shall be allowed to accomplish easily, without terrible sacrifices, merely by spending the ink of the journalist and petition-framer and the breath of the orator. Petitioning will not bring us one yard nearer to freedom; self-development will not easily be suffered to advance to its goal. For self-development spells the doom of the ruling bureaucratic despotism, which must therefore oppose our progress with all the art and force of which it is the master; without organised resistance we could not take more than a few faltering steps towards self-emancipation. But resistance may be of many kinds, - armed revolt, or aggressive resistance short of armed revolt, or defensive resistance whether passive or active; the circumstances of the country and the nature of the despotism from which it seeks to escape must determine what form of resistance is best justified and most likely to be effective at the time or finally successful.

The Congress has not formally abandoned the petitioning policy; but it is beginning to fall into discredit and gradual disuse, and time will accelerate its inevitable death by atrophy; for it can no longer even carry the little weight it had, since it has no longer the support of an undivided public opinion at its back. The alternative policy of self-development has received a partial recognition; it has been made an integral part of our political activities, but not in its entirety and purity. Self-help has been accepted as supplementary to the help of the very bureaucracy which it is our declared object to undermine and supplant, - self-development as supplementary to development of the nation by its foreign rulers. Passive resistance has not been accepted as a national policy, but in the form of Boycott it has been declared legitimate under circumstances which apply to all India.

This is a compromise good enough for the moment but in which the new school does not mean to allow the country to rest permanently. We desire to put an end to petitioning until such a strength is created in the country that a petition will only be a courteous form of demand. We wish to kill utterly the pernicious delusion that a foreign and adverse interest can be trusted to develop us to its own detriment, and entirely to do away with the foolish and ignoble hankering after help from our natural adversaries. Our attitude to bureaucratic concession is that of Laocoon: "We fear the Greeks even when they bring us gifts." Our policy is self-development and defensive resistance. But we would extend the policy of self-development to every department of national life; not only Swadeshi and National Education, but national defence, national arbitration courts, sanitation, insurance against famine or relief of famine, - whatever our hands find to do or urgently needs doing, we must attempt ourselves and no longer look to the alien to do it for us. And we would universalise and extend the policy of defensive resistance until it ran parallel on every line with our self-development. We would not only buy our own goods, but boycott British goods; not only have our own schools, but boycott Government institutions; not only erect our own Arbitration Courts, but boycott bureaucratic justice; not only organise our league of defence, but have nothing to do with the bureaucratic Executive except when we cannot avoid it. At present even in Bengal where Boycott is universally accepted, it is confined to the boycott of British goods and is aimed at the British merchant and only indirectly at the British bureaucrat. We would aim it directly both at the British merchant and at the British bureaucrat who stands behind and makes possible exploitation by the merchant.

The double policy we propose has three objects before it: - to develop ourselves into a self-governing nation; to protect ourselves against and repel attack and opposition during the work of development; and to press in upon and extrude the foreign agency in each field of activity and so ultimately supplant it. Our defensive resistance must therefore be mainly passive in the beginning, although with a perpetual readiness to supplement it with active resistance whenever compelled. It must be confined for the present to Boycott, and we must avoid giving battle on the crucial question

of taxation for the sole reason that a No-Taxes campaign demands a perfect organisation and an ultimate preparedness from which we are yet far off. We will attack the resources of the bureaucracy whenever we can do so by simple abstention, as in the case of its immoral Abkari revenue; but we do not propose at present to follow European precedents and refuse the payment of taxes legally demanded from us. We desire to keep our resistance within the bounds of law, so long as law does not seek directly to interfere with us and render impossible our progress and the conscientious discharge of our duty to our fellow-countrymen. But if, at any time, laws should be passed with the object of summarily checking our self-development or unduly limiting our rights as men, we must be prepared to break the law and endure the penalty imposed for the breach with the object of making it unworkable as has been done in other countries. We must equally be ready to challenge by our action arbitrary executive coercion, if we do not wish to see our resistance snuffed out by very cheap official extinguishers. Nor must we shrink from boycotting persons as well as things; we must make full though discriminating use of the social boycott against those of our countrymen who seek to baffle the will of the nation in a matter vital to its emancipation, for this is a crime of lèse-nation which is far more heinous than the legal offence of lèse-majesté and deserves the severest penalty with which the nation can visit traitors.

We advocate, finally, the creation of a strong central authority to carry out the will of the nation, supported by a close and active organisation of village, town, district and province. We desire to build up this organisation from the constitution the necessity of which the Congress has recognised and for which it has provided a meagre and imperfect beginning; but if, owing to Moderate obstruction, this constitution cannot develop or is not allowed to perform its true functions, the organisation and the authority must be built up otherwise by the people itself and, if necessary, outside the Congress.

The double policy of self-development and defensive resistance is the common standing-ground of the new spirit all over India. Some may not wish to go beyond its limits, others may look outside it; but so far all are agreed. For ourselves we avow that we advocate passive resistance without wishing to make a dogma

of it. In a subject nationality, to win liberty for one's country is the first duty of all, by whatever means, at whatever sacrifice; and this duty must override all other considerations. The work of national emancipation is a great and holy yajÜa of which Boycott, Swadeshi, National Education and every other activity, great and small, are only major or minor parts. Liberty is the fruit we seek from the sacrifice and the Motherland the goddess to whom we offer it; into the seven leaping tongues of the fire of the yajÜa we must offer all that we are and all that we have, feeding the fire even with our blood and lives and happiness of our nearest and dearest; for the Motherland is a goddess who loves not a maimed and imperfect sacrifice, and freedom was never won from the gods by a grudging giver. But every great yajÜa has its Rakshasas who strive to baffle the sacrifice, to bespatter it with their own dirt or by guile or violence put out the flame. Passive resistance is an attempt to meet such disturbers by peaceful and self-contained brahmatejas; but even the greatest Rishis of old could not, when the Rakshasas were fierce and determined, keep up the sacrifice without calling in the bow of the Kshatriya. We should have the bow of the Kshatriya ready for use, though in the background. Politics is especially the business of the Kshatriya, and without Kshatriya strength at its back, all political struggle is unavailing. Vedantism accepts no distinction of true or false religions, but considers only what will lead more or less surely, more or less quickly to mokØa, spiritual emancipation and the realisation of the Divinity within. Our attitude is a political Vedantism. India, free, one and indivisible, is the divine realisation to which we move, - emancipation our aim; to that end each nation must practise the political creed which is the most suited to its temperament and circumstances; for that is the best for it which leads most surely and completely to national liberty and national self-realisation. But whatever leads only to continued subjection must be spewed out as mere vileness and impurity. Passive resistance may be the final method of salvation in our case or it may be only the preparation for the final sadhana. In either case, the sooner we put it into full and perfect practice, the nearer we shall be to national liberty.

5

Other Writings of Sir Aurobindo

CONGRESS REFORMS

THE pronouncement of the Times on the proposal of the Congress for a further reform and expansion of the Indian Councils is significant for the thoroughness with which the futility and impossibility of the entire Congress ideal is exposed by the writer. Mr. Gokhale took great pains last year in his address as President of the Congress to point out, in detail, how the present Council of the Indian Viceroy might be remodelled, without disturbing the present position of the Government. His idea is that the elected members of the Viceregal Council may well be increased from five to twelve, of whom two shall be elected by the Chamber of Commerce and the representative of some important industry, and ten by the different Provinces.

The two representatives of Commerce and Industry will, Mr. Gokhale opined, be Europeans, as there shall be 10 Indian members elected to the Council, out of 25, the total strength of that body; and even if they voted together they would be in a permanent and absolute minority; and the only effect of any vote they might give against the Government would be a moral effect. This is Mr. Gokhale's position and programme; and neither the Times nor, we are afraid, anybody else outside the ranks of those who hold that everything that is unreal and moderate is the product of sound statesmanship, clearly sees what the gain either to the people or to the Government will be from the acceptance of this wise and cautious counsel. The ten Indian members will form H.M.'s permanent Opposition in India: that is all; but a permanent

Opposition has all the evils of irresponsible criticism without the advantages of a real Opposition which can some day hope to be the Government, and whom this possibility always makes sober and responsible. "The policy proposed by the Congress," says the Times, "is a policy for bringing the Government into disrepute without the safeguards which all popular constitutions provide; it is a policy for generating steam without the precaution of supplying safety-valves;" and the justice of this criticism cannot be honestly denied.

If Mr. Gokhale's programme does not guarantee any benefit to the Government, neither is it likely to confer any benefit on the people except, of course, on a handful of men who shall enjoy the luxury of being Hon'bles and get enlarged opportunities of recommending their friends, relatives and protégés for office under the Government. The people will take little interest in these Council-elections, because they will soon find out - as they have already done in Bengal, that the elected members cannot carry any popular measure successfully through the Council or oppose effectively even the most mischievous ones. Mr. Gokhale is not only anxious to keep the elected members perpetually in the minority, but though he wants them to be vested with the right of moving amendments on the Budget, the Viceroy must have the right of vetoing them even if they are carried.

The fact is, there is absolutely no seriousness about the whole thing. It is all to be a mere child's play. Or, Mr. Gokhale thinks, perhaps, that by gradually securing these so-called rights, he will ultimately get real constitutional rights and privileges from his British masters, but he forgets that these masters have never in the past done anything that has directly affected their interests and status as a sovereign power, nor will they do any such thing in the future, unless, of course, they are compelled to do it, by apprehensions of some great loss or danger. As for the idea that this so-called reform in the Legislative Council will, in any way, make for popular freedom by educating the people, that also is evidently without any reasonable justification for its success; for, as the Times very justly points out, Mr. Gokhale's programme has no room for any real political education for the people. To quote it in full: -

"Nor is the policy one which offers any substantial advantage to the people of India; it gives them increased opportunities of criticism but no increase of responsibility; it does nothing to give the people that education in politics which is essential if... they are now for the first time to have some share in the management of their own affairs. By the scheme under consideration the leaders of Indian opinion would not acquire that sense of responsibility which necessarily comes to men who expect that they will shortly be in power themselves; they are to have opportunities for finding fault with the Government but they will never have to make their words good; they can with a light heart demand a reduction of taxation or denounce the Government for not putting a stop to famines, because they know that they can never themselves be called upon to prove that these reforms are practicable. It is the prospect of office which sobers and restrains a European Opposition! Is it wise to assume that Indian politicians will be moderate and without this restraint?"

And the justice of this criticism who will deny? Mr. Gokhale's programme if accepted by Government, can have only one effect on the growth of public opinion and political life in India: it will prove the utter futility of any half-measures like these to secure real and substantial rights for the people. Such an education through failure was needed twenty-five years ago, when people still had faith in British shibboleths or had confidence in British character and British policy; it is absolutely needless and involves sheer waste of time and energy that have much greater calls on them for more substantial and urgent work now, - today when the people have already commenced to realise that their future must be shaped by themselves, without any help from their British masters, and indeed in spite of the most violent opposition that will, naturally, be offered by them.

Mr. Gokhale's creed and his policy are anachronisms in the India of 1906; the one stands absolutely discredited with the people, the other is declared unwise and impracticable by the Government. The Congress must give these up, or continue as an effete anachronism in the country, or probably turn by the logic of this creed and this policy, into a loyalist opposition to all true and forceful popular movement and propaganda in India. Can we

afford to allow an institution that we have all served so faithfully all these years, and that may at once become an organised institution of popular deliberation and effective public life, to grow effete and useless? Much less can we afford to place it in the hands of the enemies of popular freedom. That is the question before the country now. The coming Congress in Calcutta will perhaps decide this question. Friends of popular freedom should understand this and gather their forces accordingly for saving the Congress from both these calamities.

The Mirror complains piteously that the country is in the hands of extremists on one side and ultra-moderates on the other, while the voices of sitters on the fence, like the Indian Mirror, go totally unheard. It is hard on our contemporary. But he should realise that a time has come in the history of the nation when men must take one side or the other, if they wish to count for anything in the making of the future. To preside at a boycott meeting and disparage the boycott is a course which the politician concerned may reconcile with his own conscience, but it is not likely to increase the weight of his influence with his countrymen.

We are surprised to see the Pioneer join in the extraordinary can-can which the Englishman has been performing ever since the Fuller dismissal. We were accustomed to regard the Pioneer as a sober and well-conducted journal, though its political views are no less pernicious than the Englishman's; but it is surpassing Hare Street itself in journalistic high-kicks. "Beware, beware, Bengalis," it shouts, "if you rebel, we will exterminate you with fire and sword, we will outdo the atrocities we committed during the Mutiny; we are tigers, we are tigers! Look at our claws." All this is very bloody indeed and paints the Pioneer one red. But it does seem as if Anglo-India had gone clean mad. Such a pitiful exhibition will not increase the respect of the subject race for its rulers.

The Indian Mirror comes out with an article on the selfishness of Indian patriots. According to this self-satisfied critic Mr. T. Palit and the Indian Mirror are the only unselfish men in Bengal. Raja Subodh Mullick and Brajendra Kishore of Gauripore are notoriety-hunters who have chosen to pay heavily in cash and land for the titles of Raja and Maharaja. Babu Shishir Kumar Ghose is a humbug who poses as an Avatar; Babu Surendranath Banerji is a humbug

who poses as a Martyr; there is a third patriotic humbug somewhere who poses as a Hero, - we cannot fix this gentleman at present. The country does not want these gentlemen at all; it wants people who can dare and die for their country. Whether this dying is to come about by fire and sword, and the claws of the British tiger, as the Pioneer threatens, or by influenza, cholera or fright, is not clear. We gather, however, that Mr. Palit and Babu Narendranath Sen have entered into a league to dare and die for their country, and we rejoice to hear it. While waiting for this glorious consummation, we would suggest to the latter that he might expect his martyrdom with more meekness and, secondly, that if he has to attack people, he might just as well cross his t's and dot his i's instead of employing the method of half-veiled allusions. It is a method which some people might call cowardly.

The Englishman still pegs away at his portentous discovery of a secret society with the romantic name. His knowledge about it increases every day. It is not a Chinsurah society, it appears, but a Calcutta affair which is especially active in Mymensingh. This ubiquitous monster seems to be under the direction of Tibetans: probably the Tashi Lama formed it when he came to Calcutta. For it appears that the word "Golden" is a piece of Oriental symbolism and is employed by the Tibetans to signify men who are sworn to die for this or that purpose. As a matter of fact, the word Sonar is an ordinary Bengali term of pride and affection no more mystic or symbolic than Shakespeare's "golden lads and girls". The Englishman seems determined to supply the absence of a good comic paper in Calcutta. Apparently its descent to anna-price has not increased its circulation.

Bande Mataram, September 8, 1906

The "Sanjibani" on Mr. Tilak

The Sanjibani pronounces in its last issue against Mr. Tilak, on the ground that he is unpopular. But unpopular with whom? With a certain section of the old Congress leaders. Is then unpopularity with a section to be a bar against filling the Presidential chair? If so, the circle of choice will become extremely limited; for just as there are some leaders who are unpopular with the ultra-moderate section, there are others who are unpopular

with the advanced section. Mr. Gokhale, for instance, is by no means popular in his own country, the Deccan, especially since his notorious apology. His support of the boycott, qualified though it be, has somewhat rehabilitated him in the eyes of many, but he is still strongly distrusted by great numbers. Yet none dreamed of opposing his selection to the Presidential chair, on the mere ground of a partial unpopularity. If, however, the Congress leaders are going to publicly proclaim such a principle, it will be applied freely on both sides and the treasured "unanimity" of the Congress will disappear.

Secret Tactics

The telegram from our correspondent in Mymensingh, which we publish in another column, is extremely significant. It is now an open secret throughout the country that the Swadeshi movement has developed two distinct parties in the country. One of these desires to use Boycott as a political weapon merely in order to force on the annulment of the Partition and there finish; its quarrel with the bureaucracy is a passing quarrel and it is ready to be again hand in glove with the Government as soon as its turn is served; it still desires to sit on the Legislative Councils, figure on the Municipalities, and carry on politics by meetings and petitions. The other party will be satisfied with nothing less than absolute control over our own affairs and is not willing to help the Government to put off the inevitable day when that demand must be conceded; it is therefore opposed to any co-operation with the Government or to the adoption of a suppliant attitude in our relations to the Government; it desires the Boycott as a necessary part of our economic self-development and by no means to be relinquished even if the Partition be rescinded. Here are definite issues which have to be fought out until some definite settlement is reached. We desire the issue to be fought out on a fair field, each party seeking the suffrages of the country and attempting to educate the great mass of public opinion to its views. Unfortunately, the Leaders of the older school are not willing to give this fair field. They prefer to adopt a Machiavellian strategy and work in the darkness and by diplomatic strokes and secret coup d'état. They do not wish to work with the prominent and most militant members of the new school on the Reception

Committee, they will not admit the country to their councils for fear the strength of the new school might increase, and they attempt to follow the example of the Fuller Government, to prevent them from holding public meetings. Recently the new school have put forward Mr. Tilak as the fittest name for the Presidentship, and the country has already begun to respond to the suggestion. The old leaders cannot publicly confess their reasons for not desiring Mr. Tilak, but they seem to be attempting cleverly to get out of the difficulty by bringing Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji over from England. We should have thought the Grand Old Man of India was a name too universally revered to be made the stalking-horse of a party move.

But quite apart from this aspect of the question, we would draw attention to the indecorous and backstairs manner in which this important step is being made. It is the work of the Reception Committee to propose a President for the Congress; but the old leaders have been carefully avoiding any meeting of the Reception Committee and are meanwhile making all arrangements for the Congress and Exhibition secretly, unconstitutionally, and among a small clique. Had the name of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji been proposed constitutionally in the Reception Committee, all would have been well; as it is, the most venerable name in India is in danger of being associated with a party stratagem carried through by unconstitutional means. Meanwhile, there is no reason why the meetings for Mr. Tilak's Presidentship should not be proceeded with; until the Reception Committee meets and Mr. Naoroji accepts an invitation from them, the question remains open. But the attitude of the old leaders shows a settled determination to exclude the new school from public life. If that be so, the present year will mark a struggle for the support of the country, and the control of the Congress which, however long it may last, can only have one end.

The Indian Mirror sympathises with the strikers, but is quite opposed to the strike. Workmen should not combine to get their rights; they must, like good slaves, appeal to the gracious generosity of their masters! The spirit of the serf which governed our agitation in pre-Swadeshi days, still disports itself in the columns of the Mirror, naked and unashamed.

We confess the pother the Anglo-Indian press has raised over the matter has surprised us. A certain amount of ridicule we expected, but that the Kamboliatola affair should be magnified into sedition and by people calling themselves sane! We are informed, though we can hardly credit it, that Hare Street has been at the expense of telegraphing columns of matter on the subject to England, apparently in order to convince the British public that Bengal has revolted and chosen a King. Verily, the dog-star rages.

Hare Street, having failed to impress the public with that fire-breathing seditious monster of Chinsurah, "Golden Bengal", turns sniffing round, nose to earth, for a fresh trail, and finds it in our own columns. We also, it appears, no less than Babu Surendranath and "Golden Bengal" have declared "open war" against King Edward VII; we wish to get rid of "British control". Beside this the manifesto of "Golden Bengal" fades into insignificance. That Indians should openly express their aspiration to govern themselves and yet remain out of jail is a clear sign that the British Empire is coming to an end.

The Statesman has at last come to the rescue anent the moral belabouring of Babu Surendranath Banerji for his Shanti-Sechan indiscretion. The Statesman sees two dangers looming through the dust which has been kicked up over the affair. One is that the ignorant peasantry may imagine a King has been crowned in India to whom they must give their allegiance. We confess this alarming idea never occurred to us; and when we spoke of Surendra Babu as King of independent Bengal, we thought we were indulging in a harmless jest. The Statesman has opened our eyes. It is an alluring idea and captivates our imagination. But what has happened to our sober-minded contemporary? Has the madness of the Englishman infested even him that he should see such alarming visions?

The other danger is that the Anglo-Indian Journals in their wild career may discredit constitutional agitation and play into the hands of the extremists. The extraordinary demoralisation of the Anglo-Indian press has indeed been painfully evident throughout the affair; but the Statesman does not see his friend's point of view. To Hare Street Babu Surendranath Banerji is not

a moderate and constitutional leader, but a dangerous and fiery red revolutionist charging full tilt at British supremacy in India, with other revolutionists more or less scarlet in colour rushing on before or behind him. Hare Street has gone mad and, as is natural to a distracted John Bull, sees everything red. Sedition to right of him, sedition to left of him, sedition before and behind him, and through it all the Englishman like a heroic Light Brigade, charges in for King and Motherland.

Bande Mataram, September 10, 1906

The Question of the Hour

There is every sign that the issue on which the future of the national movement depends, will soon become very acute. Babu Bhupendranath Bose has put it with great frankness when he says that we must act in association with and not in opposition to the Government. In other words, the whole spirit which has governed the national movement, must be changed and we must go back to the policy of pre-Swadeshi days. This then is the issue before us. We declared a war of passive resistance against the bureaucracy on the 7th of August; and we understood that the struggle was not to end - till such a regime as Lord Curzon's should be rendered for ever impossible in the future. Are we now to declare peace and alliance with the bureaucracy and blot out the last twelve months from our history? Babu Ananda Chandra Ray made the proposal a little while ago; a much more considerable politician makes it today. It is for the country to judge.

A Criticism

Babu Naresh Chandra Sen Gupta, at a meeting of the Students' Union, made certain remarks upon the new party and the old. The spirit of the remarks was good, but the information on which they were based seems to be remarkably one-sided. He said, for instance: "The old leaders never forgot to take counsel with the new party; but the new party had spurned the old men." When, may we ask, except at Barisal where the new school was in a majority, did the old leaders take counsel with the new? Since then it has been the deliberate policy of the old leaders to exclude the new party from their counsels, and some influential men among them have even declared that they will not work with the principal men of that

party. We do not pretend to dictate to the old leaders or to the Congress, or to any other public body; we wish to have an opportunity of pressing our views on the Congress as the views of increasing numbers in the country. The future is ours and we are content to conquer it by degrees. But the determination of the old leaders is to give us no foothold on the present. A great and growing school of politics cannot consent to be treated in such cavalier fashion.

Bande Mataram, September 11, 1906

THE RESULTS OF THE CONGRESS

THE great Calcutta Congress, the centre of so many hopes and fears, is over. Of the various antagonistic or contending forces which are now being hurled together into that Medea's cauldron of confused and ever fiercer struggle out of which a free and regenerated India is to arise, each one had its own acute fears and fervent hopes for the results of this year's Congress. Anglo-India and Tory England feared that the Extremists might capture the assembly, they hoped that a split would be created, and, as a result, the Congress either come to an end and land itself in the limbo of forgotten and abortive things or else, by the expulsion of the new life and the new spirit from its midst, sink into the condition of a dead-alive ineffectual body associated with the Government and opposing it now and then only for form's sake. Liberal England represented by the Cottons and Wedderburns hoped that the unsustaining and empty concessions Mr. Morley is dangling before the eyes of the Moderate leaders might bring back the Congress entirely into its old paths and the new spirit be killed by the show of kindness.

It feared that the National Assembly might see through the deception and publicly demand that there should be either substantial concessions or none at all. In India itself the Moderates feared that the forward party in Bengal might force through the Congress strong resolutions on Boycott and other alarming matters or else avenge their failure by wrecking the Congress itself, but they hoped that by an imposing show of ex-Presidents on the platform, by the reverence due to the age and services of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, by the dominant personality of the lion of the

Bombay Corporation, by the strong contingents from Bombay city, Gujerat and other provinces still unswept by new brooms, by the use of tactics and straining in their favour all the advantages of an indefinite and nebulous constitution, they would quell the Extremists, prevent the bringing forward of the Boycott and keep absolute control of the Congress. The forward party hoped to leave the impress of the new thought and life on the Congress of 1906, to get entire Self-Government recognised as the ideal of the Congress and Swadeshi and Boycott as the means, and to obtain a public recognition of the new ideas in the Presidential address, but they feared that the realisation of such considerable results would be too much to hope for in a single year and a fierce and prolonged struggle would be needed to overcome the combined forces of conservatism, timidity, self-distrust and self-interest, which have amalgamated into the loyalist Moderate Party. Such was the state of mind of the conflicting parties when the Calcutta Congress was opened on the 26th.

Today on the 30th, we can look back and count our gains and losses. The hopes of Anglo-India have been utterly falsified and the Anglo-Indian journals cannot conceal their rage and disappointment. The loudest in fury is our dear old perfervid Englishman which cries out in hollow tones of menace that if the Congress tolerates Boycott, the Congress itself will not be tolerated. The hopes and fears of Liberal England have been only partially fulfilled and partially falsified; the Congress has definitely demanded Colonial Self-Government and it has accepted the offered concessions of Mr. Morley only as steps towards that irreducible demand; the new spirit, instead of being killed by kindness, has declared in no uncertain voice its determination to live.

The fears of the Moderates have been falsified; no strongly worded resolutions have been passed: neither has the Congress been wrecked by the rapid development of contending parties in our midst. Their hopes too have been falsified. Nothing was more remarkable in the present Congress than its anti-autocratic temper and the fiery energy with which it repudiated any attempt to be dictated to by the authority of recognised leaders. Charges of want of reverence and of rowdyism have been freely brought

against this year's Congress. To the first charge we answer that the reverence has been transferred from persons to the ideal of the motherland; it is no longer Pherozshah Mehta or even Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji who can impose silence and acquiescence on the delegates of the nation by their presence and authority, for the delegates feel that they owe a deeper reverence and a higher duty to their country. Henceforth the leaders can only deserve reverence by acting in the spirit of the chief servants of their country and not in the spirit of masters and dictators. This change is one of the most genuine signs of political progress which we have observed in our midst. The charge of rowdyism merely means that the Congress, instead of a dead unanimity and mechanical cheers, has this time shown lively signs of real interest and real feeling. It is ridiculous to contend that in a national assembly the members should confine themselves to signs of approval only and conceal their disapproval; in no public assembly in the world, having a political nature, is any such rule observed; and the mother of Parliaments itself is in the habit of expressing its disapproval with far greater vehemence than was done in this year's Congress. It was due to this growth of deep feeling and of the spirit of independence that the spells on which the Moderate leaders had depended, failed of their power to charm. The lion of the Bombay Corporation found that a mightier lion than himself had been aroused in Bengal, - the people.

For ourselves, what have we to reckon as lost or gained? No strongly worded resolutions have been pressed and we are glad that none have been passed, for we believe in strong action and not in strong words. But our hopes have been realised, our contentions recognised if not always precisely in the form we desired or with as much clearness and precision as we ourselves would have used, yet definitely enough for all practical purposes. The Congress has declared Self-Government on Colonial lines to be its demand from the British Government and this is only a somewhat meaningless paraphrase of autonomy or complete self-government. The Congress has recognised the legitimacy of the Boycott movement as practical in Bengal without limitation or reservation and in such terms that any other province which feels itself called upon to resort to this weapon in order to vindicate its rights, need not hesitate to take it up. The Congress has

recognised the Swadeshi movement in its entirety including the adoption of a system of self-protection by the people; within the scope of its resolution it has found room for the idea of self-help, the principle of self-sacrifice and the policy of the gradual exclusion of foreign goods.

The Congress has recognised the necessity of National Education. The Congress has recognised the necessity of a Constitution and adopted one as a tentative measure for a year, which, crude, meagre and imperfect as it is, depends only on our own efforts to develop by degrees into a working constitution worthy of a national assembly.

All that the forward party has fought for, has in substance been conceded, except only the practice of recommending certain measures which depend on the Government for their realisation; but this was not a reform on which we laid any stress for this particular session. We were prepared to give the old weakness of the Congress plenty of time to die out if we could get realities recognised.

Only in one particular have we been disappointed and that is the President's address. But even here the closing address with which Mr. Naoroji dissolved the Congress, has made amends for the deficiencies of his opening speech. He once more declared Self-Government, Swaraj, as in an inspired moment he termed it, to be our one ideal and called upon the young men to achieve it. The work of the older men had been done in preparing a generation which were determined to have this great ideal and nothing less; the work of making the ideal a reality, lies with us. We accept Mr. Naoroji's call and to carry out his last injunctions will devote our lives and, if necessary, sacrifice them.

Bande Mataram, December 31, 1906

Yet There is Method in It

THE "Moderate" Indian politician aspires to be an Imperial citizen. His ambition has at last been screwed up to the point of seeking equality with his "colonial brother". His loyalty draws him towards the Empire and his politics draws him towards self-government and the resultant is self-government within the Empire. Colonies have been granted self-government within the

Empire and it logically follows that if the Indians try, try, and try again, they too will gain their end because nothing is impossible to perseverance.

Thus two birds will be killed with one stone. The ruling people, whose immense power can be turned against us any moment if they happen to be irritated, will be pleased with our desire not to break away from the Empire and, at the same time the spirit of independence which is constantly urging us to demand a greater and greater measure of self-government will have its full play. Such a compromise, such a smooth scheme of accommodating comprehensiveness is being welcomed everywhere as suddenly revealed to a political prophet who is going the round of the country with the inviting message: "Come to me, all ye that are heavy-laden, and I shall give rest unto you."

The talk of this Colonial Self-Government or self-government within the Empire at a time they are going to have an Imperial conference of the Colonial Prime Ministers and have condescended to admit a representative of India to the same may very well entrap the unwary, especially when it comes from a personage who is said to have explained to the Secretary of State all that India needs in a five-minute interview.

But the pretension of the frog to rank as a quadruped of the elephant class with the mere expression of a pious wish should receive a heavy shock on learning from Reuter that either Mr. Morley or his nominee will represent India at the coming Colonial Conference. This is quite in keeping with the system of representation that India enjoys. This is a further extension of the sham which we see here in the local Legislative Councils. This is but the continuation of the farce which is known as the Local Board or Municipal Board representation.

It is a favourable sign that when some leading moderate politicians are trying fresh and big doses of poppy on our people for the offence of giving a slight indication of self-consciousness, these smart shocks for regaining self-possession are coming of themselves. The spurious politics that has so long lived only on the delusion of the people has very nearly been found out and thus elaborate preparations are going on to give it a fresh lease of life. But when the gods want to destroy a thing no human

efforts can avail. Mendicancy is no longer consistent with the stand-up position the Indians have taken up. The beggar knows only begging and bullying but his day-dreams surpass even those of Alanschar.

The imposing ideal of self-government within the Empire with which begging politics has been making its last attempt to catch the fancy of the people will hardly survive such disenchanting strokes as the representation of India on the Colonial Conference by the Secretary of State himself or his own nominee.

If India is to be India, if her civilisation is to retain a distinctive stamp and extend its spiritual conquests for the benefit of the world at large, it must be propped up with the strength of her own people.

To include India in a federation of colonies and the motherland is madness without method. The patriotism that wishes the country to lose itself within an Empire which justifies its name by its conquest - the colonies being no portion of the Empire in its strict sense - is also madness without method. But to talk of absolute independence and autonomy - though this be madness, yet there is method in it.

Bande Mataram, February 25, 1907

Mr. Gokhale's Disloyalty

Dear Bande Mataram,

You may reasonably ask me where I had been so long. My answer is that seeing the Extremists fare very well at the last Congress, I thought I had some claim to a well-earned repose. When all India kindly took to my views and fought for them in the National Assembly, I thought I could suspend my activity for a time.

But with Mr. Gokhale stumping the country to recover the lost ground and the Bengalee taking the brief of the all-powerful executive, I cannot be a silent spectator of the cold-blooded deposition of Demos.

The Aga Khan too has entered the lists. Alarmed at the Extremists' talk of freedom from British control, the combined wit and wisdom of the country is making a dead set at this crazy class

so that prudence and good sense may once more prevail in the land. The normal calm and the much-coveted peace has, to a certain extent, been restored to the country and what little of unrest still exists will pass away as soon as Mr. Gokhale will say "Amen".

Unlike the grave-diggers of Ophelia, Mr. Gokhale wants to make the extinction of British autocracy in India quite an unchristian procedure. Here lies the Empire, good; here stands India, good; if India goes to this Empire and prays for its death, it is will she nill she, she prays for something bad but if the Empire comes to her and kills itself, she kills not the Empire: argal, she is not guilty of disloyalty.

The Extremists want to bring the Empire to themselves, and not themselves to go to the Empire. What is more Christian and loyal? To make the Empire part with us as friends, or to provoke it with childish demands of colonial self-government or self-government within the Empire?

Besides, does not Mr. Gokhale know the fable that by mere buzzing about the head of a Bull or even settling himself upon his head, the gnat cannot at all inconvenience him, but though small it is by stinging only that he can arouse his attention.

In vain is Mr. Gokhale trying conclusions with people who have tried their remedies times without number and found them wanting.

Mr. Gokhale's patriotism is based on truth - he paints us as we are and warns us against the danger of too strong a stimulus in this our exceptionally weak condition.

Here is he like a wise physician who knows his patient.

But Mr. Gokhale, being such an educated and enlightened reformer, with supreme contempt for Indian prejudices, superstitions and idolatry, should be the last man to trust to mere prayer and petition for the recovery of his patient.

When the Scotch asked the King of England to appoint a day of prayer and fasting for abating the fury of cholera when it raged there a few years back, the authorities in England pooh-poohed the idea and told them to attend to the recommendations of

sanitary science. Should not Mr. Gokhale be true to himself and ask the people to attend to the recommendations of political science excluding altogether from their programme the superstition of prayer? More in my next.

Yours sincerely,

By The Way

Bande Mataram, February 28, 1907

MANY DELUSIONS

IN A country where subjection has long become a habit of the public mind, there will always be a tendency to shrink from the realities of the position and to hunt for roundabout, safe and peaceful paths to national regeneration. Servitude is painful and intolerable, - servitude is killing the nation by inches, - servitude must be got rid of, true; but the pains and evils of servitude seem almost more tolerable to a good many people than the sharp, salutary pangs of a resolute struggle for liberty. Hence the not uncommon cry, - "The violent and frequently bloody methods followed by other nations are not suited to a gentle, spiritual and law-abiding people; we will vindicate our intellectual originality and spiritual superiority by inventing new methods of regeneration much more gentlemanly and civilised."

The result is a hydra-brood of delusions, - two springing up where one is killed. The old gospel of salvation by prayer was based on the belief in the spiritual superiority of the British people, - an illusion which future generations will look back upon with an amazed incredulity. God answers prayers and the British people are god-like in their nature; so why should we despair? Even now there are prominent politicians who say and perhaps believe that although there is no historical example of a nation liberated by petition and prayer, yet the book of history is not closed and there is no reason why so liberal and noble a nation as the British should not open a new and unprecedented chapter, - a miracle which never happened before in the world's records may very well be worked for the sole and particular benefit of India! The petitionary delusion, however, though not yet killed, has been scotched; its lease of life is not for long.

Another delusion of which Babu Narendranath Sen of the Indian Mirror, and the cultured and eloquent lady whom the Mahatmas have placed at the head of the new Theosophist Church, are the principal exponents, asks us to seek our regeneration through religion, - only when we have become religiously and morally fit, can we hope to be politically free. In spite of the confusion of ideas which underlies this theory, it is one which has a natural charm for a religiously-minded people. Nevertheless it is as much a thing in the air as the petitionary delusion. If by religion is meant the nivÐtti mÀrga it is an absurdity to talk of politics and religion in the same breath; for it is the path of the few, - the saints and the elect - to whom there is no I nor thou, no mine or thine, and therefore no my country or thy country. But if we are asked to perfect our religious development in the pravÐtti mÀrga, then it is obvious that politics is as much a part of pravÐtti mÀrga as any other activity, and there is no rationality in asking us to practise religion and morality first and politics afterwards; for politics is itself a large part of religion and morality. We acknowledge that nothing is likely to become a universal and master impulse in India which is not identified with religion.

The obvious course is to recognise that politics is religion and infuse it with the spirit of religion; for that is the true patriotism which sees God as the Mother in our country, God as Ùakti in the mass of our countrymen, and religiously devotes itself to their service and their liberation from present sufferings and servitude. We do not acknowledge that a nation of slaves who acquiesce in their subjection can become morally fit for freedom; one day of slavery robs a man of half his manhood, and while the yoke remains, he cannot compass a perfect and rounded moral development.

Under a light and qualified subjection, he may indeed develop in certain directions; but in what direction are we asked to develop? In the morality of the slave, the Shudra, whose dharma is humility, contentment, service, obedience? In the morality of the merchant whose dharma is to amass riches by honesty and enterprise and spend them with liberal philanthropy? In the morality of the Brahmin whose dharma is to prepare himself for the nivÐtti mÀrga by learning and holy exercises, to forgive injuries and

accept honour or insult, wrong and injustice, with a calm and untroubled mind? It is obvious that we may develop far on these lines without coming at all nearer to moral fitness for freedom. Politics is the work of the Kshatriya and it is the virtues of the Kshatriya we must develop if we are to be morally fit for freedom. But the first virtue of the Kshatriya is not to bow his neck to an unjust yoke but to protect his weak and suffering countrymen against the oppressor and welcome death in a just and righteous battle.

A third delusion to which the over-intellectualised are subject is the belief in salvation by industrialism. One great danger of the commercial aspect of the Swadeshi movement is that many of our young men may be misled into thinking that their true mission is to go abroad, study industries and return to enrich themselves and their country. We would warn them against this pernicious error. This work is an admirable work and a necessary part of the great national yajÜa which we have instituted; but it is only a part and not even the chief part. Those who have never studied Japanese history, are fond of telling our young men that Japan owes her greatness to her commercial and industrial expansion and call on them to go and do likewise. Commercial and industrial expansion are often accompaniments and results of political liberty and greatness, - never their cause.

Yet the opposite belief is held by many who should have been capable of wiser discrimination. We find it in the truly marvellous address of Srinath Pal Rai Bahadur at Berhampur; - there is a wonderful contrast between the canine gospel of submissive loyalty preached in the first part of the address and the rampageously self-assertive gospel of economic independence preached in its tail-end. "Whatever the advantages of political advancement, they sink into insignificance when compared with the blessings which industrial prosperity brings in its train," - such is the gospel according to Srinath Pal Rai Bahadur. It is so far shared by many less loyal people that they consider industrial prosperity as prior to and the cause of political advancement. The idea is that we must be rich before we can struggle for freedom. History does not bear out this peculiar delusion. It is the poor peoples who have been most passionately attached to liberty, while there are many

examples to show that nothing more easily leads to national death and decay than a prosperous servitude. We are particularly thankful that British rule has not, like the Roman, given us industrial prosperity in exchange for political independence; for in that case our fate would have been that of the ancient peoples of Gaul and Britain who, buying civilisation and prosperity with the loss of their freemanhood, fell a prey to the Goth and Saxon and entered into a long helotage from which it took them a thousand years to escape. We must strive indeed for economic independence, because the despotism that rules us is half-mercantile, half-military, and by mortally wounding the lower mercantile half we may considerably disable the upper; at least we shall remove half the inducement England now has for keeping us in absolute subjection. But we should never forget that politics is a work for the Kshatriya and it is not by the virtues and methods of the Vaishya that we shall finally win our independence.

Bande Mataram, April 5, 1907

GRADUATED BOYCOTT

THE opponents of the New Spirit have discovered that boycott is an illusion. An entire and sweeping boycott, they say, is a moral and physical impossibility; and their infallible economic authority, Mr. Gokhale, has found out that a graduated boycott is an economic impossibility. They point to the failure of the thorough-going boycott in Bengal as a proof of the first assertion; the second, they think, requires no proof, for how can what Mr. Gokhale has said be wrong? This assertion of the impossibility of a graduated boycott is an answer to the reasoning by which Mr. Tilak has supported the movement in Maharashtra. In the first days of the movement Mr. Tilak published a series of vigorous and thoughtful articles in the Kesari on Boycott as a political Yoga. He advocated the entire exclusion of British goods, the preference of Swadeshi goods at a sacrifice when they were attainable, and, when unattainable, the preference of any foreign goods not produced in the British Empire. To the argument that this programme was not immediately practicable in its completeness, he replied that as in Yoga, so in the boycott, "even a little of this dharma saves us from a mighty peril". The mighty peril is the entire starvation of the country by

foreign exploiters and its complete and hopeless dependence on aliens for almost all articles of common use. Even a slight immediate diminution of this dependence would be a great national gain and could by degrees be extended until the full boycott policy became an accomplished fact. Mr. Tilak, with his shrewd practical insight, was able to see clearly that immediate and complete success of a thorough-going boycott was not possible in India, but that a gradually efficacious boycott would naturally result from a thorough-going boycott campaign. What Mr. Tilak foresaw, is precisely what is happening.

The entire exclusion of British-made goods is the political aspect of the Boycott with which we do not deal in this article. Is it a fact that as an economic weapon a graduated boycott is impossible? Boycott may be graduated in several ways. First, by the gradual growth of the idea of excluding foreign goods a steadily increasing check may be put on the import of particular foreign articles and a corresponding impulse given to the use of the same articles produced in India. A Government by imposing a gradually increasing duty on an import in successive tariffs may kill it by degrees instead of immediately imposing a prohibitive rate; the growth of the boycott sentiment may automatically exercise the same kind of increasing check. The growth of the sentiment will help on the production of the indigenous article and the increased production of the indigenous article will help on the growth of the sentiment.

Thus mutually stimulated, Swadeshi and Boycott will advance with equal and ever more rapid steps, until the shrinkage of the foreign import reaches the point where it is no longer profitable to import it. The process can only be checked by the insufficiency of capital in the country available or willing to invest itself in Swadeshi manufacture. But the growth of the boycott sentiment will of itself encourage and is encouraging capital to invest in this direction; for so much boycott means so much sure market for Swadeshi articles and therefore an increase of capital willing to invest in Swadeshi manufacture. The increased production of the Swadeshi article in its turn means more money in the hands of the mercantile class and of investors in Swadeshi Companies and therefore more capital available for investment in Swadeshi

manufacture. We fail to see how in this sense an automatically graduated boycott is impossible; on the contrary, it seems to us economically inevitable, provided only the boycott sentiment is increasingly embraced by the people.

Boycott may be graduated in another way. When the boycott was declared in Bengal, it was declared specially against cloth, sugar and salt, and only generally against other articles. It is therefore the imports of English piece-goods, Liverpool salt and, though only to a slight extent, of foreign sugar into Bengal which have suffered. When this specific boycott has been proved effective, it may be extended to other articles. Thus the boycott may be graduated not only in its incidence on particular articles, but in its extent and range. The graduation of a specific boycott may be partly artificial and partly automatic. It is artificial when the leaders of the people preach an economic Jehad against particular foreign goods and the people accept their decision. But this artificial boycott can only succeed when there is already an incipient industry in the corresponding Swadeshi article or some existing means of supply however partial, which may be stimulated or extended by the boycott.

Liverpool salt has been affected because 'Karkach' is available; British piece-goods have been affected because there was already a mill-industry and a hand-loom industry which have been enormously stimulated by the boycott, as is shown by the wholesale return of the weaver class to their trade in Bengal and by the increase in the number of weaving mills and the splendid dividends which the existing concerns are paying. On the other hand the campaign against foreign sugar has not been successful, because the proper substitute is not available. Yarns have not been affected because the spinning industry in India is a negligible quantity while the demand for yarn has enormously increased. In time a Jehad against foreign yarn will become feasible. But the specific boycott may also be automatic when the general sentiment of boycott attacks a particular article for which a substitute exists in the country. To take a small instance, the market for steel trunks sent ready-manufactured from England is decreasing to such an extent that failures of dealers in steel trunks are beginning to be recorded. Here again, we fail to see the impossibility of a graduated

boycott. It is quite true that in the very beginning the increase of the stimulated Swadeshi article may not be sufficient to blot out entirely the increase in the import, and the superficial and hasty may proclaim the failure of the boycott. But by the growth of the boycott the increase of the Swadeshi article must progressively swell and the increase of the import must progressively shrink until it is turned into an actual decrease. The fact that the success of the boycott is progressive and not miraculous, need not frighten or disappoint any sensible and determined boycotter. It is true also that the growth of Swadeshi may actually stimulate for a time the import of particular foreign articles, such as machinery or yarns; but the stimulation is temporary and, as soon as part of our growing capital is free and willing to invest in new fields, the graduated boycott will naturally extend itself in these directions sooner than in others.

The theory therefore that a graduated boycott is impossible, seems to us to have no foundation either of facts or of reasoning. Whatever the fate of its use as a political weapon, its success as an economical weapon depends solely on the zeal with which it is preached and the readiness with which it is received by the people.

Instinctive Loyalty

The Indian Mirror reflects nothing but its own self when it says, - "Nobody in the country, howsoever absorbed in the dreams of an Indian autonomy, wishes to see the British connection severed and the country left to her fate. This instinctive clinging to some sort of relation with England, in other words, this loyalty to the Crown of England, affords the best ground for optimism about a material improvement in the attitude of the Indian peoples toward their British rulers." There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the Mirror's philosophy. That a country cannot prosper in the true sense of the term unless it be left to its own fate is a truism with all right-thinking men. The publicists of the Indian Mirror type have a comfortable gospel of their own revealed to them by a study of their own needs rather than those of the country. No political thinker has as yet sought to convert the truth that liberty is the essential condition of all-round progress in a nation. Prison life after some time comes to be life as a matter

of habit, - the jailor comes to be respected out of fear of the rod. But to describe such diseased and abnormal sentiments as normal and instinctive is to mistake a slave for a man. It is highly prejudicial to our returning sense of self-respect that papers like the Indian Mirror should still be able to preach the gospel of servility.

Bande Mataram, April 26, 1907

NATIONALISM NOT EXTREMISM

IT IS a curious fact that even after so many months of sustained propaganda and the most clear and definite statements of the New Politics, there should still be so much confusion as to the attitude of the Nationalist Party and the elementary issues they have raised. This confusion is to some extent due to wilful distortion and deliberate evasion of the true issues. The ultra-loyalist publicists especially, Indian or Anglo-Indian, are obliged to ignore the true position of the party, misnamed Extremists, because they are unable to meet its trenchant and irresistible logic and common sense. But with the great majority of Indian politicians, the misapprehension is genuine. The political teaching of the New School is so novel and disturbing to their settled political ideas, - or rather the conventional, abstract, second-hand formulas which take the place of ideas - that they cannot even grasp its true nature and turn from it with repugnance before they have given themselves time to understand it. The most obstinate of these misapprehensions is the idea that the New Politics is a counsel of despair, a mad revolutionary fury induced by Curzonian reaction. We can afford to pass over this misapprehension with contempt, when it is put forward by foolish, prejudiced or conceited critics who are merely trying to bring odium on the movement or to express their enlightened superiority over younger politicians. But when a fair and scrupulous opponent honestly trying to understand the nationalist position falls into the same error, we are bound to meet it and once more clear our position beyond misapprehension or doubt.

Some friends of ours have thought that we were unnecessarily harsh and even unjust in our criticism of Dr. Rash Behari Ghose's speech in the Supreme Legislative Council. They urge that Dr. Ghose at least presented the Extremist position with great energy,

clearness, courage, and did it with the greater effect as one who himself stood outside our party. We have every respect for Dr. Rash Behari Ghose personally; he is perhaps the foremost jurist in India, a scholar and master of the English tongue, a mine of literature in possession of a style of his own, too rich and scholarly to be turned to such everyday uses as a Legislative Council speech. But eminence in law and literature do not necessarily bring with them a grasp of politics. Dr. Ghose has only recently turned his attention to this field and has not been long enough in touch with the actualities of politics to get a real grasp of them. It is therefore natural that he should be misled by names instead of penetrating beyond names to the true aspects of current politics. The ordinary nick-names of Moderate and Extremist do not properly describe the parties which they are used to label; and they are largely responsible for much confusion of ideas as to the real difference between the two schools. Dr. Ghose evidently labours, like many others, under the obsession of the word Extremist. He imagines that the essential difference between the parties is a difference in attitude and in the intensity of feeling. The Extremists, in his view, are men embittered by oppression which makes even wise men mad; full of passionate repining at their "more than Egyptian bondage", exasperated by bureaucratic reaction, despairing of redress at the hands of the British Government or the British nation, they are advocating an extreme attitude and extreme methods in a spirit of desperate impatience. The Extremist propaganda is, therefore, a protest against misgovernment and a movement of despair driving towards revolt. We are unable to accept this statement of the nationalist position. On the contrary, it so successfully represents the new politics to be what they are not, that we choose it as a starting-point for our explanation of what they are.

The new movement is not primarily a protest against bad Government - it is a protest against the continuance of British control; whether that control is used well or ill, justly or injustly, is a minor and unessential consideration. It is not born of a disappointed expectation of admission to British citizenship, - it is born of a conviction that the time has come when India can, should and will become a great, free and united nation. It is not a negative current of destruction, but a positive, constructive impulse towards the making of modern India. It is not a cry of revolt and despair, but a gospel of national faith and hope. Its true description is not Extremism, but Democratic Nationalism.

These are the real issues. There are at present not two parties in India, but three, - the Loyalists, the Moderates and the Nationalists. The Loyalists would be satisfied with good Government by British rulers and a limited share in the administration; the Moderates desire self-government within the British Empire, but are willing to wait for it indefinitely; the Nationalists would be satisfied with nothing less than independence whether within the Empire, if that be possible, or outside it; they believe that the nation cannot and ought not to wait, but must bestir itself immediately, if it is not to perish as a nation. The Loyalists believe that Indians have not the capacities and qualities necessary for freedom and even if they succeed in developing the necessary fitness, they would do better for themselves and mankind by remaining as a province of the British Empire; any attempt at freedom will, they think, be a revolt against Providence and can bring nothing but disaster on the country. The Loyalist view is that India cannot, should not and will not be a free, great and united nation. The Moderates believe the nation to be too weak and disunited to aim at freedom; they would welcome independence if it came, but they are not convinced that we have or shall have in the measurable future the means or strength to win it or keep it if won. They therefore put forward Colonial Self-Government as their aim and are unwilling to attempt any methods which presuppose strength and cohesion in the nation. The Moderate view is that India may eventually be united, self-governing within limits and prosperous, but not free and great. The Nationalists hold that Indians are as capable of freedom as any subject nation can be and their defects are the result of servitude and can only be removed by the struggle for freedom; that they have the strength, and, if they get the will, can create the means to win independence. They hold that the choice is not between autonomy and provincial Home Rule or between freedom and dependence, but between freedom and national decay and death. They hold, finally, that the past history of our country and

the present circumstances are of such a kind that the great unifying tendencies hitherto baffled by insuperable obstacles have at last found the right conditions for success. They believe that the fated hour for Indian unification and freedom has arrived. In brief, they are convinced that India should strive to be free, that she can be free and that she will, by the impulse of her past and present, be inevitably driven to the attempt and the attainment of national self-realisation. The Nationalist creed is a gospel of faith and hope.

Bande Mataram, April 26, 1907

SHALL INDIA BE FREE?

The Loyalist Gospel

LIBERITY is the first requisite for the sound health and vigorous life of a nation. A foreign despotism is in itself an unnatural condition and if permitted, must bring about other unhealthy and unnatural conditions in the subject people which will lead to fatal decay and disorganisation. Foreign rule cannot build up a nation - only the resistance to foreign rule can weld the discordant elements of a people into an indivisible unity. When a people, predestined to unity, cannot accomplish its destiny, foreign rule is a provision of Nature by which the necessary compelling pressure is applied to drive its jarring parts into concord. The unnatural condition of foreign rule is brought in for a time in order to cure the previous unnatural condition of insufficient cohesiveness; but this can only be done by the resistance of the subject people; for the incentive to unity given by the alien domination consists precisely in the desire to get rid of it; and if this desire is absent, if the people acquiesce, there can be no force making for unity. Foreign rule was therefore made to be resisted; and to acquiesce in it is to defeat the very intention with which Nature created it.

These considerations are not abstract ideas, but the undeniable teaching of history which is the record of the world's experience. Nationalism takes its stand upon this experience and calls upon the people of India not to allow themselves to fall into the acquiescence in subjection which is the death-sleep of nations, but to make that use of the alien domination which Nature intended, - to struggle against it and throw it off for unity, for self-realisation, as an independent national organism. In this country, however,

there is a class of wise men who regard the rule of the British bureaucracy as a dispensation of Providence, not only to create unity but to preserve it. They preach therefore a gospel of faith in the foreigner, distrust of our countrymen and acquiescence in alien rule as a godsend from on high and an indispensable condition for peace and prosperity. Even those whose hearts rebel against a doctrine so servile, are intellectually so much dominated by it that they cannot embrace Nationalism with their whole heart and try to arrive at a compromise between subjection and independence, - a half-way house between life and death. Their ingenuity discovers an intermediate condition in which the blessings of freedom will be harmoniously wedded with the blessings of subjection; and to this palace in fairyland they have given the name of Colonial Self-Government. If it were not for the existence of this Moderate opinion and its strange parti-coloured delusions, we would not have thought it worth while to go back to first principles and show the falsity of the Loyalist gospel of acquiescence. But the Moderate delusion is really a by-product of the Loyalist delusion; and the parent error must be demolished first, before its offspring can be corrected. The Moderates are a hybrid species, emotionally nationalist, intellectually loyalist. It is owing to this double nature that their delusions acquire an infinite power for mischief. People listen to them because they claim to be Nationalist and because a sincere Nationalist feeling not infrequently breaks through the false Loyalist reasoning. Moreover by associating themselves with the Moderates on the same platform the Loyalists are enabled to exercise an influence on public opinion which would otherwise not be accorded to them. The gospel according to Sir Pherozshah Mehta would not have such power for harm if it were not allowed to represent itself as one and the same with the gospel according to Mr. Gokhale.

What then are the original ideas from which the Loyalist gospel proceeds? It has a triple foundation of error. First comes the postulate that disunion and weakness are ingrained characteristics of the Indian people and an outside power is necessary in order to arbitrate, to keep the peace and to protect the country from the menace of the mightier nations that ring us in. Proceeding from this view and supporting it, is the second

postulate that there must be an entire levelling down and sweeping away of all differences, aristocrat and peasant, Brahmin and Sudra, Bengali, Punjabee and Maratha, all must efface their characteristics and differences before any resistance to foreign domination can be attempted, even if such resistance were desirable.

The third postulate is that a healthy development is possible under foreign domination and that this healthy development must be first effected before we can dream of freedom or even of becoming a nation. If these three postulates are granted, then the Loyalist creed is unassailable; if they are proved unsound, not only the Loyalist creed but the standpoint of the Moderates ceases to have any basis of firm ground and becomes a thing in the air. The Nationalist contention is that all these three postulates are monuments of political unreason and have no firm foundation either in historical experience or in the facts we see around us or in the nature of things. They are inconsistent with the fundamental nature of foreign domination; they ignore the experience of all other subject nations; they disregard human nature and the conditions of human development in communities. The Loyalist gospel is as untrue as it is ignoble.

The Mask is Off

The Anglo-Indian journals are trying to assure the public that everything is quiet in Jamalpur under the shadow of the British sword. The accounts that are appearing in various Indian journals put a very different complexion on the situation. It appears, to begin with, that the Gurkhas who were called in to preserve the peace are being allowed in cooperation with local hooligans to break it. The case of image-breaking is being deliberately put off and the whole energy of the executive is devoted to terrorising the Hindus. Several pleaders, a Muktear, a Naib of Ramgopalpur and a Superintendent of the Gauripur estate, along with other leading gentlemen of Jamalpur have been arrested. "The number of Mahomedan arrests," writes one correspondent, "is simply nil". Comment is hardly necessary. The alliance of the British bureaucracy with hooliganism stands confessed. To take advantage of Mahomedan riots in order to further terrorise by legal proceedings the assaulted Hindus, is the first preoccupation of the local magistrates. We have pointed out already that the procedure

is to give scope and room enough for anti-Swadeshi violence and pillage and then to punish the Swadeshists for the crime of self-defence or even simply for the crime of being assaulted. The mask is off.

A Loyalist in a Panic

Not only the Englishman but the Indian Mirror has been seriously frightened by the course of events in the Punjab. No wonder. The lion spirit of the Punjab was not burned on the pyre with Runjit Singh; it only went to sleep for a while after Chilianwala and is now again awake. The Mirror is uneasy for the safety of the Empire. The Mirror does not mind very much what may happen in East Bengal, but if discontent spreads to the Punjab, it may affect the Sikhs, and then what would become of the British Empire and the Indian Mirror? The remedy proposed by our senile contemporary is that we should stop all political agitation by putting off all public meetings until the country is quiet and that Babu Bepin Chandra Pal should not go about stirring up the people of Southern India "as regards Swadeshi, Boycott, Swaraj and other things".

Sir Denzil Ibbertson is also advised to cure the evil by kindness, - a wise counsel to which, no doubt, he will incline his patient ear; for where can he find a better well-wisher than the Indian Mirror? It appears that the meetings addressed by Srijut Bepin Chandra "are not likely to lessen the political unrest; on the contrary, they are decidedly adding fuel to the fire". Well, what else should be their object? To lull the country back into sleep and submission? The Mirror reminds us of a venerable old woman awakened at night by the noise of burglars in the house and recommending everybody to turn over and sleep or pretend to sleep until the house is quiet, - and the burglars, unopposed, have done their business. But we thought that the Mirror had discovered the Extremists to be a small and insignificant party without any following in the country. What does it matter what such a party is or is not doing? The country, the Mirror declared, is at the back of the Moderate Party. Has that comforting belief so soon gone to pieces?

Bande Mataram, April 27, 1907

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FOREIGN RULE

IN DEALING with the Loyalist creed it will be convenient to examine first the general postulate before we can come to those which apply particularly to the conditions of India. , The contention is that a healthy development is possible under foreign domination. In this view national independence is a thing of no moment or at least its importance has been grossly exaggerated. Nations can very well do without it; provided they have a good government which keeps the people happy and contented and allows them to develop their economic activities and moral virtues, they need not repine at being ruled by others. For certain nations in certain periods of their development liberty would be disastrous and subjection to foreign rule is the most healthy condition. India, argue the Loyalists, is an example of such a nation in such a period.

The first business of its people is to develop their commerce, become educated and enlightened, reform their society and their manners and to grow more and more fit for self-government. In proportion as they become more civilised and more fit, they will receive from their sympathetic, just and discerning rulers an ever-increasing share in the administration of the country until with entire fitness will come entire possession of the status of British citizenship. The idea is that foreign rule is a Providential dispensation or a provision of Nature for training an imperfectly developed people in the methods of civilisation and the arts of self-government. This theory is a modern invention.

Ancient and mediaeval Imperialism frankly acknowledged the principle of might is right; the conquering nation considered that its military superiority was in itself a proof that it was meant to rule and the subject nation to obey; liberty, being denied by Providence to the latter, could not be good for it and there was no call on the ruler to concede it either now or hereafter. This was the spirit in which England conquered and governed Ireland by the same methods of cynical treachery and ruthless massacre which in modern times are usually considered to be the monopoly of despotisms like Turkey and Russia. But by the time that England had fastened its hold on India, a change had come over the modern world. The Greek ideas of freedom and democracy had penetrated the European mind and created the great impulse of democratic Nationalism which dominated Europe in the 19th century.

The idea that despotism of any kind was an offence against humanity, had crystallised into an instinctive feeling, and modern morality and sentiment revolted against the enslavement of nation by nation, of class by class or of man by man. Imperialism had to justify itself to this modern sentiment and could only do so by pretending to be a trustee of liberty, commissioned from on high to civilise the uncivilised and train the untrained until the time had come when the benevolent conqueror had done his work and could unselfishly retire. Such were the professions with which England justified her usurpation of the heritage of the Moghul and dazzled us into acquiescence in servitude by the splendour of her uprightness and generosity. Such was the pretence with which she veiled her annexation of Egypt. These Pharisaic pretensions were especially necessary to British Imperialism because in England the Puritanic middle class had risen to power and imparted to the English temperament a sanctimonious self-righteousness which refused to indulge in injustice and selfish spoliation except under a cloak of virtue, benevolence and unselfish altruism. The genesis of the Loyalist gospel can be found in the need of British Imperialism to justify itself to the liberalised sentiment of the 19th century and to the Puritanic middle-class element in the British nation.

The question then arises, has this theory any firmer root? Is it anything more than a convenient theory? Has it any relations with actual facts or with human experience? To answer this question it is necessary to distinguish between three kinds of liberty which are generally confused together. There is a national liberty of freedom from foreign control; there is an internal liberty or that freedom from the despotism of an individual, a class or a combination of classes to which the name of self-government is properly given; and there is individual liberty or the freedom of the individual from unnecessary and arbitrary restrictions imposed on him either by the society of which he is a part or by the Government, whether that Government be monarchical, democratic, oligarchic or bureaucratic. The question at issue is,

then, which, if any, of these three kinds of liberty is essential to the healthy development of national life; or, can there be such development without any liberty at all?

The object of national existence, of the formation of men into groups and their tacit agreement to allow themselves to be ruled by an organised instrument of administration which is called the Government, is nothing else than human development in the individual and in the group. The individual, standing alone, cannot develop; he depends on the support and assistance of the group to which he belongs.

The group itself cannot develop unless it has an organisation by means of which it not only secures internal peace and order and protection from external attack but also proper conditions which will give free play for the development of its activities and capacities - physical, moral, intellectual. The nation or group is not like the individual who can specialise his development and throw all his energies into one line. The nation must develop military and political greatness and activity, intellectual and aesthetic greatness and activity, commercial greatness and activity, moral sanity and vigour; it cannot sacrifice any of these functions of the organism without making itself unfit for the struggle for life and finally succumbing and perishing under the pressure of more highly organised nations.

The purely commercial State like Carthage is broken in the shock with a nation which has developed the military and political as well as the commercial energies. A purely military state like Sparta cannot stand against rivals which to equal military efficiency unite a greater science, intellectual energy and political ability. A purely aesthetic and intellectual state like the Greek colonies in Italy or a purely moral and spiritual community like the empire of Peru are blotted out of existence in the clash with ruder but more vigorous and many-sided organisms. No government, therefore, can really be good for a nation or serve the purposes of national life and development which does not give full scope for the development of all the national activities, capacities and energies. Foreign rule is unnatural and fatal to a nation precisely because by its very nature it throws itself upon these activities and capacities and crushes them down in the interests of its own

continued existence. Even when it does not crush them down violently, it obstructs their growth passively by its very presence. The subject nation becomes dependent, disorganised and loses its powers by atrophy. For this reason national independence is absolutely necessary to national growth. There can be no national development without national liberty.

Individual liberty is necessary to national development, because, if the individual is unduly hampered, the richness of national life suffers and is impoverished. If the individual is given free room to realise himself, to perfect, specialise and enrich his particular powers and attain the full height of his manhood, the variety and rapidity of national progress is immensely increased. In so far as he is fettered and denied scope, the development of the nation is cramped and retarded. A Government which denies scope and liberty to the individual, as all foreign governments must to a considerable extent deny it, helps to cramp the healthy development of the nation and not to forward it. The development of the individual is and must be an embarrassment to the intruding power unless the numbers are so few that they can be bribed into acquiescence and support by the receipt of honours, employment or other personal advantages. For development creates ambition and nothing is more fatal to the continuance of foreign rule than the growth of ambitions in the subject race which it cannot satisfy. The action of Lord Curzon in introducing the Universities Act was for the British domination in India an act of inevitable necessity, which had to be done some time or other. Its only defect from the Imperialist point of view was that it came too late.

Just as individual liberty is necessary for the richness and variety of national development, so self-government is necessary for its completeness and the full deployment of national strength. If certain classes are dominant and others depressed, the result is that the potential strength of the depressed classes is so much valuable force lost to the sum of national strength. The dominant classes may undoubtedly show a splendid development and may make the nation great and famous in history; but when all is said the strength of the nation is then only the sum of the strength of a few privileged classes. The great weakness of India in the past has been the political depression and nullity of the mass of the

population. It was not from the people of India that India was won by Moghul or Briton, but from a small privileged class. On the other hand, the strength and success of the Marathas and Sikhs in the 18th century was due to the policy of Shivaji and Guru Govinda which called the whole nation into the fighting line. They failed only because the Marathas could not preserve the cohesion which Shivaji gave to their national strength or the Sikhs the discipline which Guru Govinda gave to the Khalsa. Is it credible that a foreign rule would either knowingly foster or allow the growth of that universal political consciousness in the subject nation which self-government implies? It is obvious that foreign rule can only endure so long as political consciousness can be either stifled by violence or hypnotised into inactivity. The moment the nation becomes politically self-conscious, the doom of the alien predominance is sealed. The bureaucracy which rules us, is not only foreign in origin but external to us, - it holds and draws nourishing sustenance for itself from the subject organism by means of tentacles and feelers thrust out from its body thousands of miles away. Its type in natural history is not the parasite, but the octopus. Self-government would mean the removal of the tentacles and the cessation both of the grip and the sustenance. Foreign rule is naturally opposed to the development of the subject nation as a separate organism, to the growth of its capacity for and practice in self-government, to the development of capacity and ambition of its individuals. To think that a foreign rule would deliberately train us for independence or allow us to train ourselves is to suppose a miracle in nature.

Bande Mataram, April 29, 1907

WE ARE arguing the impossibility of a healthy national development under foreign rule, - except by reaction against that rule. The foreign domination naturally interferes with and obstructs the functioning of the native organs of development. It is therefore in itself an unnatural and unhealthy condition, - a wound, a disease, which must result, unless arrested, in the mortification and rotting to death of the indigenous body politic. If a nation were an artificial product which could be made, then it might be possible for one nation to make another. But a nation cannot be made, - it is an organism which grows under the stress of a

principle of life within. We speak indeed of nation-building and of the makers of a nation, but these are only convenient metaphors. The nation-builder, Cavour or Bismarck, is merely the incarnation of a national force which has found its hour and its opportunity, - of an inner will which has awakened under the stress of shaping circumstances. A nation is indeed the outward expression of a community of sentiment, whether it be the sentiment of a common blood or the sentiment of a common religion or the sentiment of a common interest or any or all of these sentiments combined. Once this sentiment grows strong enough to develop into a will towards unity and to conquer obstacles and make full use of favouring circumstances, the development of the nation becomes inevitable and there is no power which can ultimately triumph against it. But the process, however rapid it may be, is one of growth and not of manufacture. The first impulse of the developing nation is to provide itself with a centre, a means of self-expression and united actions, a chief organ or national nerve-centre with subsidiary organs acting under and in harmony with it, if the need of self-protection is its first overpowering need. The organisation may be military or semi-military under a single chief or a warlike ruling class; if the pressure from outside is not overpowering or the need of internal development strongly felt, it may take the shape of some form of partial or complete self-government. In either case the community becomes a nation or organic State.

What, then, is the place of foreign rule in such an organic development? The invasion of the body politic by a foreign element must result either in the merging of the alien into the indigenous nationality or in his superimposition on the latter in a precarious position which can only be maintained by coercion or by hypnotising the subject people into passivity. If the alien and the native-born population are akin in blood and in religion, the fusion will be easy. Even if they are not, yet if the former settles down in the conquered country and makes it his motherland, community of interests will in the end inevitably bring about union. The foreigners become sons of the country by adoption and the sentiment of a common motherland is always a sufficient substitute for the sentiment of a common race-origin. The difficulty of religion may be solved by the conversion of the foreigner to

the religion of the people he has conquered, as happened with the ancient invaders of India, or by the conversion of the conquered people to the religion of their rulers, as happened in Persia and other countries conquered by the Arabs. Even if no such general change of creed can be effected, yet the two religions may become habituated to each other and mutually tolerant, or the sentiment of a common interest and a common sonhood of one motherland may overcome the consciousness of religious differences. In all these contingencies there is a fusion, complete or partial; and the nation, though it may be profoundly affected for good or evil, need not be disorganised or lose the power of development. India under Mahomedan rule, though greatly disturbed and thrown into continual ferment and revolution, did not lose its power of organic readjustment and development. Even the final anarchy which preceded the British domination, was not a process of disorganisation but an acute crisis, - the attempt of Nature to effect an organic readjustment in the body politic.

Unfortunately the crisis was complicated by the presence and final domination of a foreign body, foreign in blood, foreign in religion, foreign in interest. This body remains superimposed on the native-born population, without any roots in the soil. Its presence, so long as it is neither merged in the nation nor dislodged, must make for the disorganisation and decay of the subject people. It is possible for a foreign body differing in blood, religion and interest, to amalgamate with the native organism but only on one of two conditions; either the foreign body must cut itself off from its origin and take up its home in the conquered country, - a course which is obviously impossible in the present problem, - or it must assimilate the subject State into the paramount State by the removal of all differences, inequalities, and conflicting interests. We shall point out the insuperable difficulties in the way of any such arrangement which will at once preserve British supremacy and give a free scope to Indian national development. At present there is no likelihood of the intruding force submitting easily to the immense sacrifices which such an assimilation would involve. Yet if no such assimilation takes place, the position of the British bureaucracy in India in no way differs from the position of the Turkish despotism as it existed with regard to the Christian populations of the Balkans previous to their independence or of

the Austrians in Lombardy before the Italian Revolution. It is a position which endangers, demoralises and eventually weakens the ruling nation as Austria and Turkey were demoralised and weakened, and which disorganises and degrades the subject people. A very brief consideration of the effects of British rule in India will carry this truth home.

Bande Mataram, April 30, 1907

Moonshine for Bombay Consumption

The Calcutta correspondent of the Indu Prakash seems to be an adept in fitting his news to the likings of the clientele. He has discovered that the old party and the new are united not against the Government but against the Mahomedans. All are looking to the Government with a reverent expectation of justice from that immaculate source. We do not know who this anti-Mahomedan and pro-Government Calcutta correspondent may be; but we hope the Bombay public will not be deceived by his inventions. If there is one overmastering feeling in Bengal it is indignation with the Government for allowing or countenancing the outrages in the Eastern districts. Even the Loyalist organs are full of expressions of uneasiness and perturbed wonder at the inaction of the authorities while Moderate organs like the Bengalee and Moderate leaders like Babu Surendranath Banerji have expressed plainly an adverse view of the action and spirit of the Government. There is no doubt considerable resentment against men like Nawab Salimullah for fomenting the disturbances; but there is no deep-seated resentment against the low-class Mahomedans who are merely the tools of men who themselves keep safely under cover. The fight is not a fight between Hindus and Mahomedans but between the bureaucrats and Swadeshists.

The "Reformer" on Moderation

The Indian Social Reformer has discovered that the Moderate programme needs revision. Moderation is defined by this authority as a desire to preserve the British Raj until social reform has accomplished itself, for the reason that an indigenous Government is not likely to favour social reform so much as the present rulers do. The Reformer would therefore like the Moderate programme to be modified in order to tally with its own definition of

moderation. We presume that, in its view, the Congress instead of demanding Legislative Councils should ask for the forcible marriage of Hindu widows; instead of the separation of the judicial and executive, the separation of reformed wives from unreformed husbands or vice versa; instead of the repeal of the Arms Act, the abolition of the Hindu religion. This introduction of social details into a political programme is a fad of a few enthusiasts and is contrary to all reason. The alteration of the social system to suit present needs is a matter for the general sense of the community and the efforts of individuals. To mix it up with politics in which men of all religious views and various social opinions can join is to confuse issues hopelessly. It is not true that by removing the defects of our social structure we shall automatically become a nation and fit for freedom. If it were so, Burma would be a free nation at present. Nor can we believe that the present system is favourable to social reconstruction or that self-government would be fatal to it. The reverse is the case. Of course, if social reform means the destruction of everything old or Hindu because it is old or Hindu, the continuance of the present political and mental dependence on England and English ideals is much to be desired by the social reformers; for it is gradually destroying all that was good as well as much that was defective in the old society. With the programme of becoming a nation by denationalisation we have no sympathy. But if a healthy social development be aimed at, it is more likely to occur in a free India when the national needs will bring about a natural evolution. Society is not an artificial manufacture to be moulded and remodelled at will, but a growth. If it is to be healthy and strong it must have healthy surroundings and a free atmosphere.

Bande Mataram, May 1, 1907

UNITY AND BRITISH RULE

IT IS a common cry in this country that we should effect the unity of its people before we try to be free. There is no cry which is more plausible, none which is more hollow. What is it that we mean when we talk of the necessity of unity? Unity does not mean uniformity and the removal of all differences. There are some people who talk as if unity in religion, for instance, could not be

accomplished except by uniformity. But uniformity of religion is a psychical impossibility forbidden by the very nature of the human mind. So long as men differ in intellect, in temperament, in spiritual development, there must be different religions and different sects of the same religion. The Brahmo Samaj was set on foot in India by Rammohan Roy with the belief that this would be the one religion of India which would replace and unite the innumerable sects now dividing our spiritual consciousness. But in a short time this uniting religion was itself rent into three discordant sects, two of which show signs of internal fissure even within their narrow limits; and all these divisions rest not on anything essential but on differences of intellectual constitution, variety of temperament, divergence of the lines of spiritual development. The unity of the Hindu religion cannot be attained by the destruction of the present sects and the substitution of a religion based on the common truths of Hinduism. It can only be effected if there is, first, a common feeling that the sectarian differences are of subordinate importance compared with the community of spiritual truths and discipline as distinct from the spiritual truths and discipline of other religions, and, secondly, a common agreement in valuing and cherishing the Hindu religion in its entirety as a sacred and inalienable possession. This is what fundamentally constitutes the sentiment of unity, whether it be religious, political or social. There must be the sense of a community in something dear and precious which others do not possess; there must be an acute sense of difference from other communities which have no share in our common possession; there must be a supreme determination to cherish, assert and preserve our common possession from disparagement and destruction. But the sentiment of unity is not sufficient to create unity; we require also the practice of unity. Where the sentiment of unity exists and the practice does not, the latter can only be acquired by a common effort to accomplish one great, common and all-absorbing object.

The first question we have to answer is - can this practical unity be accomplished by acquiescence in foreign rule? Certainly, under foreign rule a peculiar kind of uniformity of condition is attained. Brahmin and Sudra, aristocrat and peasant, Hindu and Mahomedan, all are brought to a certain level of equality by equal

inferiority to the ruling class. The differences between them are trifling compared with the enormous difference between all of them and the white race at the top. But this uniformity is of no value for the purposes of national unity, except in so far as the sense of a common inferiority excites a common desire to revolt against and get rid of it. If the foreign superiority is acquiesced in, the result is that the mind becomes taken up with the minor differences and instead of getting nearer to unity disunion is exaggerated. This is precisely what has happened in India under British rule. The sentiment of unity has grown, but in practice we are both socially and politically far more disunited and disorganised than before the British occupation. In the anarchy that followed the decline of the Moghul, the struggle was between the peoples of various localities scrambling for the inheritance of Akbar and Shahjahan. This was not a vital and permanent element of disunion. But the present disorganisation is internal and therefore more likely to reach the vitals of the community.

This disorganisation is the natural and inevitable result of foreign rule. A state which is created by a common descent, real or fictitious, by a common religion or by common interests welding together into one a great number of men or group of men, is a natural organism which so long as it exists has always within it the natural power of revival and development. But as political science has pointed out, a state created by the encampment of a foreign race among a conquered population and supported in the last resort not by any section of the people but by external force, is an inorganic state. The subject population, it has been said, inevitably becomes a disorganised crowd. Consciously or unconsciously the tendency of the intruding body is to break down all the existing organs of national life and to engross all power in itself. The Moghul rule had not this tendency because it immediately naturalised itself in India. British rule has and is forced to have this tendency because it must persist in being an external and intruding presence encamped in the country and not belonging to it. It is doubtful whether there is any example in history of an alien domination which has been so monstrously ubiquitous, inquisitorial and intolerant of any centre of strength in the country other than itself as the British bureaucracy. There were three actual centres of organised strength in pre-British India - the supreme ruler, Peshwa or Raja or Nawab reposing his strength on the Zemindars or Jagirdars; the Zemindar in his own domain reposing his strength on his retinue and tenants; and the village community independent and self-existent. The first result of the British occupation was to reduce to a nullity the supreme ruler, and this was often done, as in Bengal, by the help of the Zemindars. The next result was the disorganisation of the village community. The third was the steady breaking-up of the power of the Zemindar with the help of a new class which the foreigners created for their own purposes - the bourgeois or middle class. Unfortunately for the British bureaucracy it had in order to get the support and assistance of the middle class to pamper the latter and allow it to grow into a strength and develop organs of its own, such as the Press, the Bar, the University, the Municipalities, District Boards, etc. Finally the situation with which British statesmen had to deal was this: - the natural sovereigns of the land helpless and disorganised, the landed aristocracy helpless and disorganised, the peasantry helpless and disorganised, but a middle class growing in strength, pretensions and organisation. British statesmanship following the instinctive and inevitable trend of an alien domination, set about breaking down the power it had established in order to destroy the sole remaining centre of national strength and possible revival. If this could be done, if the middle class could be either tamed, bribed or limited in its expansion, the disorganisation would be complete. Nothing would be left of the people of India except a disorganised crowd with no centre of strength or means of resistance.

It was in Bengal that the middle class was most developed and self-conscious; and it was in Bengal therefore that a quick succession of shrewd and dangerous blows was dealt at the once useful but now obnoxious class. The last effort to bribe it into quietude was the administration of Lord Ripon. It was now sought to cripple the organs through which this strength was beginning slowly to feel and develop its organic life. The Press was intimidated, the Municipalities officialised, the University officialised and its expansion limited. Finally the Partition sought with one blow to kill the poor remnants of the Zemindar's power and to influence and to weaken the middle class of Bengal by dividing it. The suppression of the middle class was the recognised

policy of Lord Curzon. After Mr. Morley came to power, it was, we believe, intended to recognise and officialise the Congress itself if possible. Even now it is quite conceivable, in view of the upheaval in Bengal and the Punjab, that an expanded Legislature with the appearance of a representative body but the reality of official control, may be given not as a concession but as a tactical move. The organs of middle class political life can only be dangerous so long as they are independent. By taking away their independence they become fresh sources of strength for the Government - of weakness for the class which strives to find in them its growth and self-expression.

The Partition opened the eyes of the threatened class to the nature of the attack that was being made on it; and the result was a widespread and passionate revolt which has now spread from Bengal to the Punjab and threatens to break out all over India. The struggle is now a struggle for life and death. If the bureaucracy conquers, the middle class will be broken, shattered perhaps blotted out of existence; if the middle class conquers, the bureaucracy are not for long in the land. Everything depends on the success or failure of the middle class in getting the people to follow it for a common salvation. They may get this support by taking their natural place as awakeners and leaders of the nation; they may get it by the energy and success with which they wage their battle with the bureaucracy. In Eastern Bengal, for instance, the aid of a few Mahomedan aristocrats has enabled the bureaucracy to turn a large section of the Mahomedan masses against the Hindu middle class, and the educated community is fighting with its back to the wall for its very existence. If it succeeds under such desperate circumstances, even the Mahomedan masses will eventually follow its leading.

This process of political disorganisation is not so much a deliberate policy on the part of the foreign bureaucracy, as an instinctive action which it can no more help than the sea can help flowing. The dissolution of the subject organisation into a disorganised crowd is the inevitable working of an alien despotism.

Bande Mataram, May 2, 1907.

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